

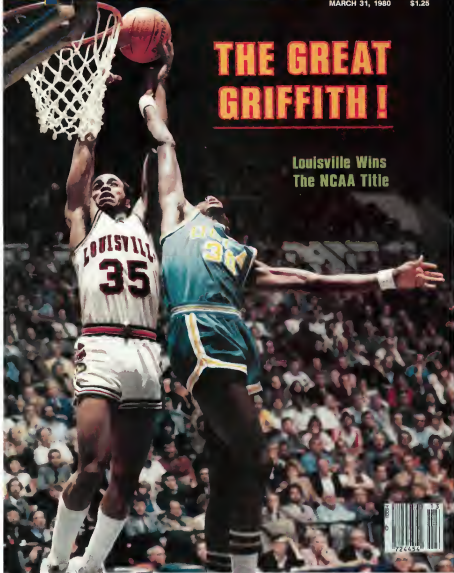
Sports Illustrated

MARCH 31, 1980

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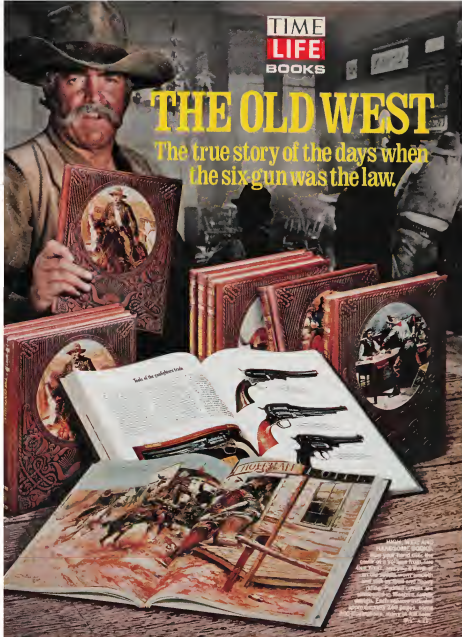


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SCORECARD

Edited by JERRY KIRSHENBAUM

INSIDE A TROJAN COURSE

Unlike USC track star Billy Mullins, who received transfer credit for courses offered at far-flung community colleges at practically the same hour (SCORECARD, March 24), 28 other Trojan athletes, including 19 football players, are in ditch because of their involvement in a course offered on their own campus. According to USC officials, the trouble began with the discovery last Dec. 4 that the athletes were enrolled in Speech Communication 380 but weren't attending classes. The instructor resigned and the athletic department's academic coordinator was suspended, but USC officials said that eligibility for the Rose Bowl, in which the Trojans beat Ohio State 17-16, was unaffected because the athletes had been given a five-day "crash course."

But June Shoup, chairman of USC's Speech Communication department, now says that the university is reviewing the athletes' work in the crash course, which consisted of written evaluations of debates. The campus newspaper, the *Daily Trojan*, quoted a USC administrator as saying that some of the evaluations "demonstrated that [the football players] were being exploited. We are just carrying these people and in the process they're not getting any education." The *Trojan* ran part of what it said was an evaluation by an athlete who evidently was impressed with the persuasive powers of a debater named John:

"I when went John because He had a point on what I couldn't not again, so that made me think girl don't have body (or lady) unless they want that why I went with John."

Until the decision was made to review all course work, the evaluation's author apparently was slated to receive credit for the course. And for all anyone knows, he still may.

CROWING & CRYING

Baseball is thriving as never before, as the game's higher-ups are the first to admit. They proudly point out that major

league attendance last season reached an all-time high of 43,550,398, the fourth straight year in which the record had been broken. Last week Commissioner Bowie Kuhn's office reported that season-ticket sales for 1980 are, once again, onward and upward. With Opening Day still three weeks away, eight of the 26 teams—Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Houston, Baltimore, California, Boston, Milwaukee and Texas—had already set season-ticket records. Thirteen other clubs have been selling season tickets at a pace ahead of last year's, and several of them seem sure to break records, too. Only Philadelphia, San Diego, the Mets, Toronto and Oakland are experiencing declines, and the Phillies still hope to equal last year's team record of 19,000 season tickets. And once the season is under way, the Mets could be aided at the ticket windows by the tonic effect of new ownership and the A's by the addition of Billy Martin as manager.

None of which prevents baseball's owners from crying poor to justify the hard line they are taking in their current contract dispute with the players. Marvin Miller, whose union is threatening to strike, might regard that as something of a contradiction.

WING AND A PRAYER

On Feb. 17, 1979 Providence College's Rudy Williams sank a length-of-the-court desperation shot at the first-half buzzer in an 84-77 basketball win over Rhode Island. The distance subsequently was measured as 89 feet, and the shot went into the Guinness Book of World Records as the longest field goal ever. Two months ago Virginia Tech's Les Henson hit a basket in the final seconds against Florida State that was both more dramatic—it won the game 79-77—and longer than Williams' shot. At least it was longer if you accept as valid the post-game measurement of 89' 3". But wait. Should the distance on such baskets be measured from the shooter's heel or toe? Or from his fingertips? And does the mea-

surement properly end at the front of the basket rim or the back?

The field-goal record is also causing confusion in other ways. Recently Steve Topping, an editor at Sterling Publishing Co., the U.S. publisher of the Guinness book, belatedly learned of a three-point basket that the Indiana Pacers' Jerry Harkness scored at the buzzer to beat the Dallas Chaparrals 119-118 in an ABA game in 1967. Apparently because of discrepancies in eyewitness accounts, Harkness' basket has been listed at both 88 and 92 feet.

On top of all this, a San Diego man named Steve Myers happened to read a newspaper story about Henson's basket and alerted Guinness to a shot he accidentally made while playing for the



Cowlitz Redi-Mix AAU team in a 139-52 loss to Pacific Lutheran University's junior varsity in that school's gym in Tacoma, Wash. in 1970. Putting the ball in play from under his own basket, Myers flung a pass downcourt—and the ball went in. Although the rules of the game specify that out-of-bounds shots don't count, the refs allowed the "basket." Pacific Lutheran officials confirm Myers' account and put the distance he heaved the ball at 92' 3/4".

So what's the record? Topping says that the next edition of the Guinness book will likely credit Henson with the longest field goal in a college game and Harkness with the pro record—probably at 92 feet—and that Myers' shot will be listed merely as a "claim." Confesses Topping with a sigh, "We're sorry we ever got into this."

continued

TRACY, TRACEY, TRACEE

Tracy Austin and Tracy Caulkins, who last year became the youngest winners ever of the U.S. Open tennis tournament and the Sullivan Award, respectively, recently had their braces removed and celebrated their 17th birthdays. Australian swimmer Tracey Wickham, who holds the world record in the 800-meter free-style, has turned 17, too. But don't worry. As Austin, Caulkins and Wickham grow creaky with age, here come 13-year-old Tracee Talavera, who earlier this month won the American Cup gymnastics title, and Canadian figure skater Tracey Wainman, who may be even more precocious. Wainman is just 12, yet two weeks ago she placed 14th in the world championships in Dortmund, West Germany.

Contrary to what one might conclude, the name Tracy (or Tracey and Tracee) was not particularly fashionable in the English-speaking world when the aforementioned girls were born in the '60s. What popularity the name did enjoy, moreover, was derived partly from Tracy Lord, the character Grace Kelly played in the 1956 movie *High Society*. She had trouble making up her mind as to which of several suitors to marry, the sort of indecisiveness none of her young, famous and obviously single-minded namesakes have evinced in their rush to the top of their various sports.

OFF ONE COURT, INTO ANOTHER

The San Diego Clippers announced last week that Bill Walton would be sidelined for the rest of the season because he had reinjured his left foot. Walton, who had returned to action Jan. 29 after missing nearly two seasons on account of a fractured instep, suffered a "stress reaction" in the same spot and doctors warned this could lead to a new fracture if he continued playing. Coming on top of his previous layoffs, the latest injury raised fears that Walton's basketball career might be at an end, a line of speculation that was heightened two days later when he filed a malpractice suit against the Portland Trail Blazers' team doctor, under whose care he claims he suffered "severe and extensive and permanent damage."

Walton insists, however, that he will overcome his latest setback and play again. He averaged 13.9 points and nine rebounds in the 14 games during which he performed for the Clippers, but says that at no time in that period did his foot feel right. "I just never had any drive

off it," he says. He believes he came back too soon and says he will "wait until the pain goes away" and then play himself back into shape during the summer. "There is no possibility that it's all over," the 27-year-old Walton says. "I still believe I can make it all the way back."

Then what about the lawsuit? According to Walton, his latest injury had nothing to do with the timing of the suit, which had been in the works for months. Of course, the most recent injury could buttress his case when it finally comes to trial. The suit accuses Dr. Robert D. Cook, who treated Walton during his years with the Trail Blazers, with, among other things, failing to diagnose the fracture that has brought him so much grief and prescribing "inappropriate" medication and injections. For his part, Cook says, "It is just as well that all the facts in this matter be laid on the table—and be laid to rest."

IN THE CLEAR

The International Amateur Athletic Federation has restored the eligibility of nine leading track and field athletes. Four of them, including U.S. high jumper Dwight Stones and French hurdler Guy Drut, had been suspended, supposedly for life, because of violations of IAAF rules regarding amateur standing. The remaining five, middle-distance stars Torka Petrova of Bulgaria and Natalia Marasescu of Romania and three other Eastern European women, had been banned last October for taking anabolic steroids. Although these suspensions were officially for life, too, IAAF procedures allow for reinstatement in drug cases after 18 months. However, the suspensions now will be lifted on July 1—after just eight months. If, as expected, the International Olympic Committee clears the nine athletes, all will be eligible to compete in the Moscow Olympics.

Stones had been suspended for accepting prize money for an appearance on the TV show *Superstars* and had previously been cleared by the AAU to return to domestic competition. Drut, the 1976 Olympic gold medalist in the 110-meter hurdles, had been punished for receiving under-the-table payments. Also reinstated were John Smith and Henry Hines of the U.S., both of whom had competed on the defunct International Track Association pro circuit. Smith had energetically lobbied for reinstatement, arguing that the IAAF was unfair in ban-

ishing athletes for life for taking money but for only 18 months for taking drugs. Contrary to press reports, none of the IATA's other 70-odd performers were returned to the IAAF's good graces. But shotputter Brian Oldfield, for one, is in the process of applying for reinstatement and is expected to get it, too.

The clearing of Stones, Drut, Smith and Hines should cause little discord because the action comes at a time when amateur rules in international sport are generally being relaxed. Reinstatement of the five women found guilty of taking steroids is more controversial. It particularly angers Arnold Beckett of Great Britain, a member of the IAAF medical commission, which conducts the federation's doping tests. "If they want tests carried out for them they are going to have to carry out their own rules," he said.

IAAF President Adrian Paulen of the Netherlands noted that an 18-month suspension in the steroid case would have kept the women out of the Moscow Olympics, which would have constituted "an extra penalty." He said that the IAAF Council had therefore reinstated them for "humane reasons." Paulen conceded that the action might appear to be a setback to the IAAF's campaign against drug use. This didn't stop him from casting the vote in favor of reinstatement that broke the council's 8-8 deadlock on the issue.

THEY'RE STRONG DURING FINALS WEEK

Of the 16 teams that have made it to the final four in the NCAA basketball and hockey tournaments the past two seasons, two conferences have accounted for half. One is easy—the Big Ten. The other? The Ivy League, which last year sent Penn and Dartmouth to the final four in basketball and hockey, respectively, and has qualified Dartmouth and Cornell for this week's hockey final four in Providence. The other semifinalists are North Dakota and Northern Michigan.

THEY SAID IT

- John Mackey, former Baltimore Colt tight end, lamenting the absence of a black head coach in the NFL: "I look at all the coaches in the game today, and I think to myself there's no reason why a black coach can't lose, too."
- Johnny Walker, world middleweight wrist-wrestling champion, expounding on the demands of his sport: "It's about 90% strength and 40% technique." **END**

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A BIG HAND FOR THE CARDS

Capping a whacky NCAA tournament, the Cardinals of Louisville came from behind to defeat UCLA and win their first national championship

by CURRY KIRKPATRICK

After all that had happened in Indianapolis Monday night, the only real surprise was that Darrell Griffith didn't grab the national championship trophy, take another stutter step and make one last glorious leap straight through the rafters of Market Square Arena, not to touch down until he was over Louisville. No other encore would have been as fitting following Griffith's wondrous performance, which finally turned the crazy NCAA tournament right side up and gave Louisville a 59-54 defeat of UCLA.

Oh, there were other heroes for the Cardinals. Rodney McCray, who had a game-high 11 rebounds; Wiley Brown, who left his famous artificial thumb on the breakfast table and had to have it retrieved from a hotel dumpster; Roger Burkman, whose lip was saced open by a team manager's clipboard late in the game; and Jerry Eaves, the overlooked second guard who played with two good thumbs, two good lips and consummate poise. Brown and Burkman took down the key late rebounds, and Eaves made two clutch baskets to tie the game at 54-all with 2:54 remaining.

But it was Griffith who came through

when all the freshmen and sophomores on both sides weren't up to the task. "Just his presence out there was the big factor," said UCLA Coach Larry Brown. "We were trying to guard the greatest player in the country."

After Louisville Coach Denny Crum had given his team a halftime tongue lashing—"You're choking," he said; after seven lead changes in the second half; after Rocket Rod Foster and Slew Sanders had forged the Bruins' biggest lead, 50-45, with 6:28 remaining, and after Griffith had been held without a basket for almost 10 minutes by the skin-tight checking of three different Bruins; the Louisville star went to work. In a little more than four minutes he was responsible for 11 points with a three-point play off an alley-oop pass, a jumper from deep in the corner, two assists to Eaves (for an open 16-footer and a drive) when every defender in the vicinity was converging on Griffith; and, ultimately, the caper, one last up-and-away *continued*

If Griffith was the ace, then McCray was the long scoring, blocking shots and raking the boards.







continued

shot from the top of the circle that grazed nothing but cord and gave Louisville a lead (56-54) it would keep forever.

It was Griffith's ninth and last basket—he had a game-high 23 points—and, as it turned out, the Cards didn't need any more, because the Bruins finally began to show the effects of the tenacious Louisville press and of the tension in what Larry Brown called "the toughest NCAA final ever." UCLA threw the ball away and then lost what should have been an easy jump ball. The Cardinals were in a freeze now, and Derek Smith nailed two free throws with 52 seconds left to make the score 58-54.

UCLA had one last chance when senior Kiki Vandeweghe raced into the left corner for a jumper with 29 seconds remaining. Vandeweghe had attempted an ill-timed, off-balance, swooping, juking layup way back around the four-minute mark, which would have given the Bruins a six point lead (56-50), perhaps an insurmountable margin. But he missed that shot when the alert Eaves crossed underneath and forced him to change direction, and he missed this one, too. The Cardinals were home free. Reserve Poncho Wright shouted, "We're the baddest!" while Griffith himself put the evening in broader perspective.

"When I enrolled at Louisville I promised I'd bring home the championship," he said. "But tonight they sagged a lot and I capitalized on the others getting off. This was never just the Darrell Griffith Show. This was the Louisville Show."

As if winning the championship for his school wasn't enough, Griffith also rescued the final four from second-rate-itis. This was no small achievement considering that UCLA, Iowa and Purdue, the other three finalists, had finished fourth, tied for fourth and third in their respective conferences and had suffered 26 of the survivors' 29 defeats.

Though those 29 losses didn't break the record of the 1954 final four—LaSalle, Bradley, Penn State and USC had 33 among them—it wasn't exactly an upper. Among others on finals night, coaches George Raveling of Washington State and Jim Valvano of Iowa must have been taking bows all around. During the reg-

ular season the Cougars whipped UCLA by 16 points and the Gaels embarrassed Louisville by 17.

If there was one thread connecting the improbabilities of the event, it was the legacy of John Wooden. The Wizard of Westwood's imprimatur was on every team: Wooden had been three times an All-America as a player at Purdue. He was an instructor at the naval pre-flight training school at Iowa during World War II. He had spent a legendary coaching career (10 national champions) at UCLA. Finally, he had tutored Crum, both as a UCLA player and as an assistant coach. As Wooden's wife Nell said one day, "John has about a 95% interest in this thing."

On Friday there were upwards of 6,000 basketball-crazed fans in Market Square for the practices—they wouldn't have cared if a ninth-place finisher from the Mojave Desert Fix-A-Transcript Conference had qualified. Wiley Brown saw the

mob and vowed, "They're going to see some of it today."

Brown meant dunks. As in Doctors of Dunk. As in Dunkenstein, or simply Stein (which is what Griffith's teammates call him). And the Cardinals did throw down some outrageous, screaming whammers in their warmup session. But Crum's major accomplishment this year has been to instill the lesson that you dunk for show, you stay disciplined for dough, and Louisville did just that to defeat Iowa in the semifinals, 80-72.

The game moved to 22-17 in favor of Louisville almost before anyone realized that Griffith and the Hawkeyes' marvelous Ronnie Lester were not just dueling one-on-one. Playing on his surgery-repaired knee, Lester scored Iowa's first 10 points while Griffith had 10 of Louisville's first 12. After the Card guard got eight more (now he led the Hawks by himself, 18-17), Lester made a steal and broke for the Iowa basket.



Iowa's Keith Boyla failed to score against Louisville and airborne Derek Smith offers one reason why

As he rose through the air, Lester was bumped hard by Burkman, and he crumpled to the floor, trying to protect his right knee as he landed. The fall was nothing; it was the bump that did the damage. The knee was bruised so badly that Lester was unable to continue. As he limped slowly off the court, the entire Louisville team approached and made apologies. "Sorry, man. I hope you get back," Smith said.

But Lester would not. As Iowa's best shooters, Kevin Boyle and Vince Brooks, continued to miss (20 of 26 shots for the game), Louisville expanded its lead. Pounding Iowa on the offensive boards, the Cardinals went ahead 34-29 at the half and 66-55 with 7:03 to go.

By this time an anguished Lester had left the Iowa locker room to watch a TV monitor in a janitor's closet. Griffith, meanwhile, had scored 32 points from so many implausible angles that Wiley Brown said, "I didn't know where they were coming from."

One came on a post-up, float-to-the-corner fallaway jumper with Boyle draped all over Griffith. Another was initiated at the top of the circle—at least that's where Boyle and Steve Krafcsin thought Griffith was. He faked both men up in the air to the right, whirled back left and lifted off free to drill another one-hander from, Krafcsin said, "the moon." Earlier in the week Griffith had been asked how he would guard himself. "I'd keep me away from the ball," he said, "because when I get it . . ." Unfortunately, because Griffith often brings the ball upcourt, keeping it from him would be a good trick.

Griffith finished with 34 points (14 of 21 from the field; the team shot 59.6%), six assists and five rebounds. Oh yes, he made three steals and blocked two shots and, upon leaving the game, ran the length of the court to slap hands with everyone on the Iowa bench.

"The man was flying over us all day. We tried four different guys on him and there was nothing any of them could do," said Iowa Coach Luke Olson.

UCLA's Brown was faced with a similar task in the other semifinal, in which the Bruins locked initials with Joe Barry Carroll of Purdue. As UCLA's 67-62 victory over JBC unfolded, however, Carroll was hardly in evidence.

Not when Vandeweghe, he of the sword-swift first step, drove for dunks three times and made two other inside



Upcourt against Purdue leads Sanders, whose switch from forward to center made the Bruins click.

baskets on the way to 16 first-half points. Not when the Bruins' multi-wave pivot defense—Sanders, James Wilkes and Company—roughed up the placid Joe Barry and denied him space as well as the ball. And not when Carroll's teammates needed him the most; i.e., when forwards Arnette Hallman and Drake Morris were hurling up enough bricks to rebuild Indy's Monument Circle.

Only Purdue's defense—and 23 points from Keith Edmondson—kept Coach Lee Rose's team in the game. Carroll, who has yet to guard anything but his own privacy, hardly was a factor there, either. "He seemed tired," said Sanders. "He didn't even protect the basket," said Wilkes. "What's the big deal? Alton Lister [of Arizona State] is tougher."

To be fair, Purdue came back from a 10-point deficit, and Carroll (17 points, eight rebounds, six turnovers) did make two vital baskets over the 6' 6" Sanders late in the game to pare the UCLA margin to 59-58 and to 61-60. But in between he missed a jump hook that would have given Purdue the lead. Then the Bruins kept making free throws (21 of

25 for the game, 136 of 166 for the tournament), Morris cast off another rock from the corner that landed somewhere near Ohio, and that was that. The fairly gorgeous actress-starlet-model-cheerleaders of UCLA began celebrating the team's return to the championship game for the first time in five years.

All weekend Larry Brown had referred to himself as "the little Jewish boy from Brooklyn who screwed up this team." He had referred to his helter-skelter Bruins as "wackos." And he had referred to Griffith as "Griffin, or whatever."

After Monday night, Brown may have figured out how to pronounce his executioner's name. At the end, even Vandeweghe was trying to guard Griffith, making it four Bruin defenders to go along with the four Iowans who had tried and failed on Saturday.

One of those Hawkeyes, Bob Hansen, may have said it best. Asked just how good was the wildest-jumping player in the wildest NCAA tournament ever, he said, "I've guarded other guys who could leap high before. But all of them came down." **DNB**

MONARCHS OF ALL THEY SURVEY: PART TWO

Meanwhile, north of Indy, Old Dominion extended its reign, defeating Tennessee to win the AIAW title for the second consecutive year by JOE JARES

Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va., until 1962 a mere appendage of the College of William & Mary, is the nation's capital of his-and-hers hoops. The male Monarchs, winners of the Division II NCAA title in 1975, made it into the Division I tournament this year, losing to UCLA 87-74. Not bad, though they'd better watch out, lest the Lady Monarchs turn the school into a matriarchy.

Led by three-time All-America Guard Nancy Lieberman and the twin towers under the backboards, 6' 5" Inge Nissen of Denmark and 6' 8" Anne Donovan, ODU embarrassed opponents all season. It beat UCLA by 28, USC by 43, Virginia Union by 60 and Virginia by 35 and 39. In a romp over Rutgers earlier this month, Lieberman had 27 points, 16 rebounds, 10 assists, four steals and wrote three term papers at halftime.

Last Sunday afternoon in Mount Pleasant, Mich., the Lady Monarchs were near their best for a gymful of fans at Central Michigan University and a national TV audience. They beat Tennessee for the third time this season—it was their 27th victory in a row—and thus won their second straight AIAW national championship, improved their record to 37-1 and proved conclusively that in the short history of women's college basketball they are the best yet. The final score: Old Dominion 68, Tennessee 53.

It was Tennessee's third time in the final four but only the first in the title game. The Lady Vols climbed that high not only because of good coaching from Pat Head but also because of the overly liberal transfer rule of the AIAW, which allows a woman to switch schools and play right away. No sitting out a year, a semester or even so much as half a game. Even Head dislikes the rule, though she has benefited from it the most. Her two big scoring threats are transfers, 6' 5" Cindy Noble from Ohio State and 6' 3" Jill Rankin from Wayland Baptist in Texas. Rankin moved to Tennessee this sea-

son, after making All-America and playing on numerous international teams.

Old Dominion had by far the most fan support in Mount Pleasant, including a student decked out in a powder-blue lion suit, a man from a Norfolk radio station dressed up as a sea gull, the school band in powder-blue uniforms and a retired Navy man who wore powder blue right down to his shorts. Tennessee had to make do with a few followers waving pompons and the Mount Pleasant High School band dressed for the occasion in orange Tennessee T-shirts.

But the entire population of Knoxville couldn't have helped the Lady Vols shoot over Donovan, who blocked 10 shots and pulled down 17 rebounds, and Nissen,

who led all scorers with 20 points. Time after time Rankin and Noble would get the ball in the middle and end up having their shots baited away, contributing to Tennessee's woeful 33% field-goal average. And the Vols couldn't relieve the pressure by hitting from outside. Guards Holly Warlick and Lea Henry were a dismal 3 for 18.

To top it all off, Lieberman was up to her old ballhandling tricks, looking at press row while rifling a blind pass to Nissen underneath, hitting a jumper from the left baseline, stealing, rebounding and hounding Tennessee in the Monarchs' "passive press," designed to stop the Vols from running and to use up time on the 30-second clock getting the ball upcourt. All told, Lieberman, who had to sit several times because of foul trouble, had 12 points, nine rebounds and six assists.

"Lieberman's probably the most tenacious ballplayer I've ever seen," says Old Dominion Coach Marianne Stanley. "You don't find many guards that'll rebound the way she does. You don't find many players who can completely control the tempo and complexion of the

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEORGE TREEMANU



Lieberman looked one way, threw another, surely leaving the Lady Techsters in the dark.

ball game as Nancy does. I don't think I've seen many people who have her confidence. You can't teach that. Nancy probably had that when she was born. She probably came out of the womb swinging."

All the Monarchs came out of the locker room swinging Friday night for their semifinal game against Louisiana Tech. The Lady Techsters—surely that is a strong candidate for the worst nickname in college sports—were the only team to beat Old Dominion this season, 59-57 in Madison Square Garden in December. In that game Tech shut down ODU's inside attack, helped by the fact that Donovan, a freshman who was probably the most heavily recruited female athlete in the nation last year, was doing a Statue of Liberty imitation instead of constantly moving and seeking the ball. After that game, Stanley, a two-time All-America guard at Immaculata College, ordered double practice sessions for a week and a half "and did the things we had to do to establish our inside game."

Stanley had forecast nothing but nail-biters for the AIAW tournament, but she changed her mind just before the Louisiana Tech game. "We came out of the locker room and I was standing there watching us shooting," she said later, "and—when!—we were hot as a pistol. Everybody was concentrating really hard and making a lot of shots, and that's not typical of us. And I thought, 'If they keep doing this, it's going to be unbelievable.'"

Most of the time Nissen and Donovan dug in on either side of the hoop on offense, ready to gobble any missed shot and toss it back up. Together they had 34 points, 19 rebounds and numerous receptions.

Stanley says that four of her guards, Lieberman, Angela Colman, Chris Critelli and Rhonda Rompolo, can play at wing or point guard, dishing out the passes. "I like Nancy at the point," she says, "but tonight it became evident that we weren't shooting well from the wings until I made a switch and put her out there. She dropped in a couple from about 18 feet and I said, 'Stay over there.'"

The Monarchs led by 14 at halftime and probably could have won by 40 but their stars were on the bench at the end, and the final score was 73-59. By then Stanley's 4-year-old daughter, Michelle,

who wants to be a cheerleader, was fast asleep at courtside with her head on an injured player's lap. No novelty to her to see Lieberman fire a no-look pass.

In the other semifinal, South Carolina met Tennessee, completing an all-Dixie final four. This seemed slightly absurd in the middle of Michigan, but it was a site suited to South Carolina freshman Guard Evelyn Johnson, who comes from Lansing, about an hour's drive south of Mount Pleasant. A younger sister of Magic Johnson, Evelyn knows some tricks herself, having scored 54 points in one game at Lansing's Everett High. (The best big brother ever did there was 52.)

Evelyn dislikes the nickname "Lady Magic," preferring "Sweet E" or just "E." She can't pass like Magic, but she certainly can shoot. She was South Carolina's top scorer in five of six games preceding the semis.

"Evelyn has progressed much more than I expected as a freshman," says South Carolina Coach Pam Parsons. "I don't think anyone thought she would develop as a freshman into the dominant player on a team in the final four."

Unfortunately, Johnson played only about half the game against Tennessee and scored just nine points.

Tennessee led by as much as 17 late in the second half and was getting a fine offensive game from Noble, who sank 12 of 14 shots, mostly turnaround jumpers, and had a total of 29 points. But with 3:42 left, and the score 70-56, South Carolina went into a full-court press and the Lady Vols' lead began to melt away, down to six, then four. It was two with 56 seconds left. But Johnson fouled out with 29 seconds to go, Warlick made one of the two free throws and Tennessee hung on for a 75-72 win.

E, who more resembles DePaul's Mark Aguirre than brother Magic, was quite a bit sweeter on Sunday. Although she again played only about half a game, this time she scored 21 points and grabbed 10 rebounds as the Lady Gamecocks—a singularly inappropriate nickname—beat Louisiana Tech 77-69 for third place.

Though she is certain to make plenty of All-this and All-that teams, Johnson wasn't named to the sportswriters' unofficial all-star five in Mount Pleasant (the AIAW doesn't believe in such things), which consisted of Old Dominion's Lieberman, Donovan, Nissen (MVP),



The 6' 6" Donovan loomed over Tennessee.

Tennessee's Noble and South Carolina's Sheila Foster.

It was Lieberman who recruited Nissen in Europe to join her at Old Dominion four years ago. Did they dream then of two national championships?

"Well, we were optimistic," said Lieberman with a grin. "People there asked me, 'Where is it? Is it part of America?' I'd say, 'Yes, it's a nice school with nice people.'"

"And coaches here told me, 'You'll never win a championship or make All-America or get any recognition if you go to ODU.' I hate to say, 'I told you so,' but..."



STATING 'IRON REALITIES'

If there was any doubt about President Carter's resolve to boycott the Olympics, it was dispelled at a White House meeting with athletes **by KENNY MOORE**

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski's pointer struck the map beside him with some force as he reviewed the Carter Administration's interpretation of the military and political situation in Afghanistan, Iran and the southwestern regions of the Soviet Union. However, last Friday the national security affairs adviser's rapt audience in the East Room of the White House was not government officials but 150 past and prospective Olympic athletes and coaches gathered to hear why the Administration was convinced that the U.S. must not participate in the Summer Olympic Games in Moscow.

Brzezinski spoke for 30 minutes. He noted that the 12-week-old U.S.S.R. takeover has made Afghanistan a "strategic wedge," effectively doubling the Soviets' border with Iran and potentially placing Soviet tactical aircraft within range of the narrow Strait of Hormuz, through which passes "an enormous percentage of the West's oil." He said 105,000 Soviet troops are currently occupying Afghanistan. He cited evidence that suggested the possible Soviet use of toxic weaponry, of attempts to seal the borders and of construction of permanent bases, saying, "They are creating no im-

pression that the invasion will be reversed. We might as well face that fact."

In the audience, Jane Frederick's eyes were wide. The American record holder in the pentathlon was thinking, "Yesterday I was on a sunny track in Santa Barbara. Today I'm being exposed to the iron realities of the world."

Brzezinski went on to say that the invasion was seen by the Administration as part of a larger pattern of Soviet disregard for restraint in foreign policy. For that reason, he said, the Administration decided it had to respond more strongly than with just diplomatic protest. "That would be a historically irresponsible underreaction," he said. "We must convey to the Soviets that unilateral action will bring counteraction." The grain embargo and the restrictions on providing computer and oil-drilling technology to the U.S.S.R. were part of that response, as was strengthening the U.S. military presence in the region. And so was the decision to boycott the Games.

"To the U.S.S.R., sport is an extension of politics," said Brzezinski. "For years they have maintained that the selection of Moscow as the 1980 Olympic site is confirmation of the world's approval of Soviet foreign policy. We do not oppose the Olympics. It is the site we oppose. We have determined that we cannot permit business as usual in social, cultural, scientific or commercial activities. We can't say of sport that 'this is somehow immune.' It's not logical, not possible. Worse, it is symbolically wrong, morally wrong to hold this festival of peace in the capital of an aggressor nation posing a threat of such strategic significance."

Fred Newhouse, a gold and silver medalist in track at Montreal, rose and asked with appeal in his voice, "Can anything at all happen now that will let us go?"

The probability of such an event, said Brzezinski, was comparable to that of his stout growing whiskers. "We certainly will reconsider if they depart, but that seems very, very unlikely."

After Brzezinski had finished, Deputy White House Counsel Joseph Onck sketched the Administration's plan for alternative world-class competition this year. Those games would be scheduled for late August or early September, a few weeks after Moscow, and would be open to all athletes, including the Soviets. Each of several sites, as yet undisclosed, would host clusters of sports, each organized by a present national or inter-

national sports authority, the whole tied together for the world by television. TV revenues, he claimed later, could run as high as \$50 million, and thus support a large part of the endeavor.

Onk had fielded only a few questions when the White House press corps crowded noisily into the warm and humid room. The television lights blazed on and President Carter strode in. Later, watching the evening news, many athletes would be surprised to learn that their quiet as the President entered was almost unprecedented and was interpreted as a pointedly cool reception. In fact, the athletes had not clapped because he had appeared so swiftly and unexpectedly and because no one had told them that applause is customary.

Carter began with a few quiet words of sadness over the death of 22 members and officials of a U.S. boxing team in Poland a week earlier, saying, "When we are confronted with stark tragedies, we are moved to inventory what is most important in human life. I've invited you with some trepidation to discuss a matter of thousands of human lives in Afghanistan, and the danger of many more being lost if we are unwilling to sacrifice to protect the security of the United States. I am determined to keep that national interest paramount—even if people I admire and love, like you, are forced to sacrifice."

Carter's blue eyes were icy as he said, "I cannot say what other nations will not go. Ours will not go."

He said his audience occupied a special place in American life, "not because of ability alone, but because Olympic athletes are a personification of the achievement of excellence in an environment of freedom, honoring of human rights, and peace. Of all the sacrifices Americans are being asked to make, yours is the deepest and most personal." Therefore he pledged himself to the success of alternative competitions and said he would create a special award for American Olympians in such games, "to commemorate how you helped to preserve freedom and enhance the principles of the Olympics and the nation."

Swimmer Bruce Furniss asked what the President would do if the U.S. Olympic Committee or athletes individually tried to go to the Moscow Olympics. Carter said he had the authority to stop travel, "but that would be a drastic step I wouldn't want to face. I'd prefer to stay equivocal on it just now."

At a reception following the meeting, Villanova miler Don Paige summarized the athletes' initial impression. "We ain't goin'," he said.

However, 97 athletes met later in the Hay-Adams Hotel where an informal poll showed 44 opposed to the boycott action, 29 in favor of it and 24 agonized abstentions.

The full range of sentiments was clearly expressed. Boxer Jimmy Clark said, "I think it's unpatriotic to even wait for the President to have to tell us not to go." Volleyball player Flo Hyman said, "We are ambassadors of peace. To destroy the Olympic movement—which a boycott may well do—isn't worth a gesture that the Russian people won't even be told about." Sailor Dick Tillman said, "It seems a choice between logic and emotion. Today we got the facts, and they leave little room for hope. But emotionally, Lord, it's hard to give it up."

The next morning, Onk accepted an invitation to speak to the 47 athletes who belong to the Athletes' Advisory Council of the U.S. Olympic Committee, the only athletes' association in which all Olympic sports are represented. He agreed to answer questions for one hour and stayed more than two. To those who said the threat of a boycott obviously was not moving the Soviets out of Afghanistan, Onk replied that the rationale was to send a message to influence subsequent Soviet decisions. "Most Soviet dissidents and émigrés, including Andrei Sakharov, have said we should not go, as have most U.S. Kremlinologists."

Onk seemed perhaps excessively sanguine about the U.S. continuing to collect international support. "I think there is a good chance that none of the major Western European countries will go and that their nonparticipation, especially that of the French [who are said to have uncommon influence within the International Olympic Committee], might convince the IOC to cancel or postpone the Games." Such hopes seemed to be dimmed by the announcement from a meeting of European Olympic committees in Belgium a few hours later that eight national Olympic committees—including those of France, Italy and Great Britain—pledged to send their athletes to Moscow no matter what their governments wanted them to do.

In the end, it seemed Onk had won much respect but few additional converts. The Athletes' Advisory Council drafted a statement supporting the Ad-



Onk proffered plans for alternative games

ministration's goals, but proposing that a team be entered that would refuse to take part in the opening, closing or medal ceremonies. The athletes sent the statement to Carter in hopes of further discussion. "It would be a double mission that the American people would be proud of and the Soviets couldn't possibly hide," said canoeist Andy Toro.

The White House didn't immediately respond, but Onk had already set out the reasons that such a plan, which had been considered by the Administration, had been discarded. "The IOC has rules that penalize the athletes for political displays," he said, "and what would be dramatic on U.S. television would never be shown on Russian. Finally, if the team goes, we surrender the possibility of so wide a boycott that the Games are stopped."

Thus remains the iron reality that President Jimmy Carter has no intention of changing his mind. **END**



Breznesev assessed the situation in Afghanistan

SEEMS LIKE OLD TIMES



In a stroll down memory lane, Trevino, Player and Nicklaus had it in the TPC, with Super Mex the noteworthy winner

by DAN JENKINS

The Tournament Players Championship at this place called Sawgrass, an event that for the past three years had featured wind-tunnel golf, produced enough glamour last week to make its Sunday scoreboard a gift item in a Neiman-Marcus Christmas catalog. This year's TPC also happened to produce the kind of game on the final day that takes an old head-to-head fighter like Lee Trevino to win.

Among the golfing oddities that history may eventually have to record is that every time Trevino and Jack Nicklaus go up against each other in the same pairing in a championship of any magnitude, the winner is Super Mex. Back in 1971 he defeated Nicklaus at Merion in a playoff for the U.S. Open title. Trevino delivered a second blow to Nicklaus in 1974 in the last round of the PGA at Tanglewood. And then came last Sunday at Sawgrass, which is near Jacksonville, when the two of them, plus none other than Gary Player, went out together in the final group of the day—surely the most glittering threesome of the past few seasons and the first time they had ever played together—and again it was Trevino who not only shot the low round in the group, but also hung in there to outlast an assortment of other challengers whose names read like those on the pages of an autograph book. Trevino fired a final-round two-under-par 70 for a ten-under-par total of 278, which broke the tournament record by five strokes and made him a one-stroke winner over Ben Crenshaw, who closed with

Trevino started and ended Sunday one merry stroke up on a who's-who-of-golf leader board

a blazing 66. But the main thing Trevino did was whip the 73s scored by both Nicklaus and Player and fend off such luminaries as Tom Watson, Hubert Green and Severiano Ballesteros.

Trevino began the day as the leader by one stroke after rounds of 68, 72 and 68. But when you looked at who was following him, you had to suspect that with the Sawgrass course tamed by glorious weather, almost anything might happen. Green, who had a 66 on Saturday, was a stroke back. He had two strokes on Player, who was coming off five victories in his last seven tournaments in South Africa and Ivory Coast. He held a three-stroke edge over Nicklaus, who had lost a sudden-death playoff to Raymond Floyd at Doral a week earlier, and also over Ballesteros, who is merely the British Open champion. Looking further back in the field, you had to note that Trevino was only four shots ahead of Watson, the tour's leading money-winner the past three years, and Hale Irwin, merely the U.S. Open champion, who had been the co-leader of the TPC through the first and second rounds. Finally, Crenshaw was within striking distance, five strokes back, which is no distance at all when his putter is, as they say, "cooking."

Earlier, Trevino had said, "I told everybody not to wake Jack up at Doral. 'Let him sleep,' I said. But now they done woke him up, and I've got him again."

Come on, Lee. That's exactly what you like. While Trevino may have been thinking primarily about Nicklaus—and Player—because he had to keep looking at them from up close, he couldn't ever dismiss the other 8 x 10 glossies playing up there ahead of him on the course. Trevino never was out of the tournament lead on Sunday, but he did have to share it at different times over the front nine holes with Green, Player and Ballesteros, mostly because he bogeyed the second hole while Player birdied two of the first three and Ballesteros birdied two of the first four and Green birdied one of the first four.

But the most amazing interlude of the day came at a point in the early stages of the back nine when Trevino held the lead over six players who were all tied for second. They were Nicklaus, Player, Watson, Green, Crenshaw and Ballesteros. If the leader board at that moment wasn't

suitable for framing, then tournament golf has no hope.

The shoot-out among Trevino, Nicklaus and Player remained close through 13 holes. At that juncture, Trevino and Nicklaus were both two under par for the day and Player was one under. On the 14th, Player fell away by driving out of bounds and winding up with a double bogey. Half an hour later Nicklaus began a string of three finishing bogeys. Trevino just kept playing beautiful golf. When he ran home a birdie putt at the 15th hole to put himself three under for the day—and go two strokes ahead of his nearest pursuer, who by now was Crenshaw—his caddy, Herman Mitchell, said that memorable thing all caddies say in such circumstances: "Let's take it on home, babe."

Crenshaw made a marvelous run with his flawless 66. But having made a few putts earlier to get where he was, he missed golden birdie chances at both the 16th and 18th holes. Afterward he said, "This must be a major championship, because I finished second again." In the end what he did was force Trevino to make a cozy par five on the last hole to ensure his victory. This Super Mex did with a joyous certainty that comes only from experience and a firm command of a very sound golf game.

Trevino became overcautious only once, at the 17th hole when he was clinging to a two-stroke lead over Crenshaw, who had already reached the scorer's tent. Trying to make sure that he didn't drive into the water on the left, he hit his tee shot so far to the right that he couldn't reach the green, and the result was a bogey.

Of his tee shot on the final hole, Trevino said, "I bailed out on my driver. I wasn't sure it was ready to forgive me right away, so I went with a one-iron off the 18th tee."

Trevino said he had apologized to the driver, because this was the club mainly responsible for putting him on 41 out of 56 fairways during the four rounds at Sawgrass. Where accurate driving is concerned, there has hardly ever been a player with the control of Trevino—not since Ben Hogan. *continued*

Player and Nicklaus watched shots with Trevino until they caught a cropper on Sawgrass' back nine





"You don't bail out on your honey," Lee explained. "but it was time to win a golf tournament."

On Sunday the TPC was a tournament that had everyone's double knits unraveling. Even the press tent got excited, and CBS was giddily envisioning the possibilities of a sudden-death play-off among Nicklaus, Trevino, Player and A. C. Nielsen.

The excitement said a lot about the state of the game itself. In no other sport is it so important for aimes to make news, or so believe the majority of TV producers and newspaper and magazine editors the world over. And they probably reflect the attitude of the fans. Only the competitors themselves are not so given to hero worship. Only they understand that there are 150 very good golfers in every tournament on the tour, and that the man who has a hot putter that week is most likely to be the winner. The problem arises when the winner turns out not to be a certified immortal. A series of unfamiliar names on the leader board is taken as an indication that something is wrong, and the blame falls everywhere.

The tour is blamed for turning out robots—tall blond clones—newspapers and magazines are blamed by the tour for not "developing personalities," television is blamed by all for putting a dreary sameness on the screen, and PGA Commissioner Deane Beman is blamed for everything from the price of gasoline to unruly winds. And everyone is blamed wrongly.

The fact is, professional golf has never been very much different. Golfers go about trying to win money every week the best way they know how, and some of them can't help it if they are blond and tall. A tall, blond competitor will become a star by winning consistently. It has never been the obligation of the press to manufacture personalities. Ben Hogan would have been a very poor host of a talk show, but with a golf club in his hands at a major championship, he was both a star and a personality. Arnold Palmer's charisma away from the golf course—apart from the fame he earned by sweating and trying to keep his shirttail in—could best be *continued*



Trevino's victims included Crenshaw, he of the amazing final-round putter, who finished second, a waterlogged Ballastena and a wistful Watson

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There have always been many so-called characters on the tour, and there may be more now than ever. But they will not be glamourized, or even made known to the public, until they have proved themselves as winning golfers to a world that prefers to recognize only winners—a Nicklaus, a Trevino, a Player. Or a Johnny Miller. Because of this, television is catching most of the heat. Golf ratings are down and nobody knows what to do about it. Sponsors are getting testy and demanding that they pay less for their commercial minutes. Some players are alarmed about this and wonder whom to blame. Many fault the press, though not the "national" press. They choose to blame the "local" press, the poor wretches who see the pros only once a year in their hometowns and frequently express bitterness in print over the absence from a particular tournament of a Nicklaus or Trevino, rather than going to the trouble to find out what an engaging fellow Joe Imman is.

The players are partly right in their criticism, but they shouldn't confine their complaints to the writers. Often it is the editors who are disenchanted. Writers like to exchange tales of editors holding them personally responsible for the fact that Nicklaus failed to win the such-and-such tournament.

Television can be blamed for practically every ill in the world. Directors, producers and announcers constantly find themselves in no-win situations. If an event is dull, then the telecast will almost certainly be dull. And if the telecast attempts to pump life into a dull event, it is being dishonest. All three networks covering the sport go about it a little differently. CBS tends to follow the action, for better or worse. ABC tries to "featurize" the news while it is taking place. And NBC, which is very good on other sports, can't decide which golf approach it wants to do worst.

No matter what novel TV techniques are brought to bear, it is impossible for any of the three networks to make a golf tournament exciting if an unknown is going to win it in unexciting fashion. And it is even less possible for announcers to sound interesting if all they ever get to say is, "Let's go to 14."

So as the Sunday Leader board at Saw-

grass took on the look of golf's Hall of Fame, everybody's burden seemed to lighten. Trevino, Player, Nicklaus, Green, Watson, Irwin and Ballesteros hold a total of 38 major championships among them. The Magnificent Seven were infiltrated only by a Curtis Strange, a Peter Jacobsen, a Don Pooley, a Jay Haas and a Brad Bryant.

But even Strange and Haas have won tournaments. And Jacobsen is one of the true underground characters on the professional tour, capable of mimicking the swing, voice and gestures of anybody in the tournament—a future personality and a fine player. The only unseemly lurkers were Pooley and Bryant. Don Pooley sounds as if he might be a stock car driver, and Brad Bryant surely has to be a running back from Dartmouth.

When you stopped to think about it, the marvelous grouping on the leader board shouldn't have been all that unusual. Only accomplished players have won at Sawgrass in the four years the TPC has been held there—Nicklaus, Mark Hayes, Lanny Wadkins and now Trevino—despite all of the howling about the golf course and the ferocious winds that have made breaking par a noteworthy achievement. Next year, the TPC moves across AIA to a permanent home at the Tournament Players Club, a new course conceived by Beman and designed by Pete Dye. The wind won't stop, but Dye's design is likely to stop cameras from all over the world. One can already see that it is a magnificent layout, a par 72 that won't play any longer than 6,800 yards. A mounded-up amphitheater at the 18th hole will accommodate a truly mind-boggling 40,000 spectators. It appears to combine everything that is wonderful about Pine Valley and Cypress Point. Dye is in a class by himself as far as golf course architects go, and the Tournament Players Club at Sawgrass is almost certain to be his masterpiece.

Given the fact that the TPC already has the toughest field in golf, this combination—best field, best course—might very well result in making the championship the fifth major. Once that happens, it will no longer matter who wins. A major can withstand an unknown from time to time. And even the press has been able to tolerate an unknown for a day or so.



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Can I be calm, can I be cool,
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(From the poem *Temper* by Don Bragg,
1960 Olympic pole-vault champion)

At a cocktail party in Atlantic City's Boardwalk Regency Hotel casino, a proper young woman carrying a silver tray laden with elegant hors d'oeuvres, approaches Bragg. Bragg passes his cigar over the dainty creations, tapping off the ash as he does so, exhales a huge puff of smoke at the woman, then belches. She scurries off to regain her sensibilities. Bragg laughs loudly. He laughs alone. An onlooker says, "Don, you're outrageous."

"No, I'm not."

"Oh, what would you consider outrageous?"

"I have a friend who throws ashtrays around in bars. Now that's outrageous. See what I mean?"

"But sticking that paper napkin in your mouth, chewing it up and spitting it out is not outrageous?"

"Certainly not."

"Or putting that wine cork in your nose at dinner last night?"

"Certainly not. I can see you don't understand. When I do something like that, some people will look at me in disgust, but others will laugh and things will get better. All I want is to try and make life a little less boring. See, most people superficially float through their calendar."

Don Bragg, who is 44, doesn't float through his calendar, he crashes. In fact, he hasn't floated over much of anything since that glorious September day two decades ago when he cleared 15' 5" in Rome, an Olympic record. He also held the world indoor (15' 9½") and outdoor (15' 9¼") records. And while 18-foot vaults are fairly routine now that fiberglass poles are being used, nobody ever jumped higher than Bragg with the old stiff, aluminum pole (except for a disputed vault of 15' 9¼" by Bob Gutowski in 1957). Indeed, Bragg and another gold-medal vaulter, the Rev. Bob Richards, have offered \$10,000 to anyone who can jump 15' 9" with the old-style pole.

Don's brother George says, "Winning that gold medal has done him damage. He just keeps going around saying, 'Hey, I'm a gold-medal winner.' There are more

important things in life." Clearly, Bragg wants to be a celebrity, but he is widely ignored; he wants to be remembered as a star, but many have forgotten. He continually introduces himself as "Don Bragg Olympic Champion." There is no comma. Most people have two names; Bragg has four.

In 1960, Bragg was a household name, the incredible hulk from Villanova. Be-

'I DON'T MAKE A GOOD PET'

So says Don Bragg, ex-Olympic champ, Tarzan manqué and a man who has great rapport with himself

by DOUGLAS S. LOONEY

fore that, he was somebody from the other side of the tracks in Penns Grove, N.J. The family lot was adjacent to the Cabbage Patch, an area of Penns Grove inhabited by transitory ladigents. Don's father had ulcers and could drink no alcohol. Finally, the ulcers got so bad he had to have an operation. It was a success. He could drink. At which time the old man became an alcoholic.

Bragg's life is full of excesses, too, outrageous excesses. "We are taught that you need to be constant, not hypocritical," he muses. "Who says? And we are taught that there is one God. Who says? Maybe there's a Board of Trustees."

Two decades ago, Bragg—he of the phenomenal physique—was certain he was going to get to play Tarzan in the movies. So was everybody else. He and his wife, Terry, lived the legend, going to bed at night wearing leopard-skin nightshirts. But Tarzan he never was. Richards calls the slight "a crying shame. He could swing from trees and had such a great Tarzan yell." Muhammad Ali, another gold medalist in Rome, says, "Don had real talent. He was a little heavy but a good athlete. I thought he would have made such a good Tarzan." To this day Bragg persists in signing autographs ("Tarzan! Don Bragg.")

"I hate to say it, but everything since

continued



1960 has been downhill," Bragg declares. "That's a fact that exists. To be obsessed by a goal, then go get it, what can top that?" When he asked Terry to marry him after the Olympics, he said, "I've accomplished what I wanted to in life. We might as well get married."

Past accomplishments but brought the cheer

But suddenly present is this fear:

Yes, I feel I have exceeded

The excitement which I have needed

—TIME OUT, by Bragg



Balancing act. Bragg wins a drinking contest at his bar and, supported by daughter Renée and wife Terry, does a pull-up on his old aluminum pole



Oddly, Bragg is now having the biggest success—since Rome, of course—as athletic director at tiny Stockton State College in Pomona, N.J., eight miles west of Atlantic City. What has happened is that because of Bragg the school has developed an enormously successful intramural sports program. Of the 3,800 students, more than 1,000 are engaged in intramurals. There are 26 flag-football teams in the fall, with 25 players each, and this spring more than 50 softball teams, with 12 players each. At many schools, intramurals mean throwing a ball out, blowing a whistle and hoping some students are around and interested enough to take it from there.

Not so at Stockton, which is situated in the scrub pine forests of South Jersey. It is the area treated by John McPhee in his book *The Pine Barrens*, in

which he says that most other Jersey people think of the Pineys as people who live in caves and intermarry. McPhee writes of a Piney couple "who took a wheelbarrow with them when they went out drinking, so that one could wheel the other home." In other words, Bragg's kind of place.

A report written by Chuck Tantillo, a Stockton vice-president, confesses that there is "not much for students to do with their nonclassroom/leisure-time hours in Pomona. In reality, there is almost next to nothing available within 10 miles of the campus to occupy students' leisure-time energies."

Predictably, Bragg says the intramural program, which he started in 1972 when he became Stockton's athletic director, is "the best in the nation." However, a few minutes later, he allows that "if all

the students lived on campus instead of us having so many commuters, we would have the best intramural program in the nation."

But, Don, you said earlier you did have the best program in the nation.

"Oh, well, pick one."

Larry James, a member of the U.S. gold-medal 4 x 400-meter relay team at the Mexico City Olympics and a silver medalist in the 400, is one of Bragg's assistants. Says James, "Don does nothing normal. Some people are outrageous in certain aspects of their lives. He's outrageous in all aspects."

In his office, when talk turns to the well-managed intramural program, Bragg inexplicably loses interest. He spits in his wastebasket. Well, toward his wastebasket. "Don't say much about Stockton," he finally blurts. "These bastards fight me every step of the way."

Getting intramurals going wasn't easy. Says Bragg, "I went over to the student union and pleaded with them. Nobody listened. Finally I said, 'Everybody who comes out in the parking lot for a game of softball will share a keg of beer.' That worked."

"The problem was that all we had was a bunch of long-haired white guys with bandannas and a bunch of arrogant, non-regimented black city kids. They wanted to debate everything. I'd say, 'Your game is on Field B.' They'd say, 'Why Field B?'"

These days, Bragg says he likes intramurals mostly because "we drink beer and throw each other in the lake. We're

talking about belonging. I should be commended for our intramurals, but I'm not, because some of the people at Stockton think I'm crazy. But I don't care about them." He emphasizes his displeasure with a resounding belch.

And he's off on another tirade: "We got started here, finally, and had intramurals and everything was fine, especially flag football. Then, dammit, the girls wanted to play. What was I supposed to do? I mean guys are going to bust butts, right? So I say, 'O.K., girls, come on, but if you can't take it, I don't want to hear about it.' Then I get all this crap, and so I have to set up six powder-puff teams. It was awful. I mean if the weather got a little cold, they didn't show. Any excuse.

"So I decided we'd try volleyball. Twenty-four teams. I'd say about a quarter are all-girl teams, where they dress up in costumes and have fun, and another quarter are coed, and then the other half."

Which are?

"Real teams."

What do you mean, real teams?

"All men."

All women I do despise!

—Women, by Bragg

At home, Bragg is often seized by the muse of poetry. On the road to the local people he achieves an emission level equal to that of his roped

What is fascinating is how Bragg, described by one friend as the "unequivocal macho man," can survive his own candor. "Let me tell you about the time I was getting ready to hire a soccer coach," he says, pausing to spit on his office wall. "First thing I hear is the students want to hire the soccer coach. So I say, 'O.K., we'll have a meeting.' A bunch shows up and I say, 'I'll listen to what you have to say, but I can assure you that your input is minor.' It was a short meeting."

When he talks of Stockton's intercol-

legiate sports (eight, including basketball, soccer and track and field, but not football), he says, "Look, we're Division III. No scholarships, no nothing. All we can hope for is a 9.9 sprinter who might, with proper coaching, get to 9.7. Now that's still slow as hell, but the fact is, we're not dealing with thoroughbreds. Whenever one of these guys starts telling me about what he's going to do, I say, 'What have you done?' Then I say, 'If you're the best, like you say, what the hell are you doing at Stockton?'"



Bragg abruptly stands up and says, "Let's quit talking about this crap and go have a drink and talk about me."

The bartender approaches and says, "Don, the lady on down the way says your cigar smoke is bothering her, and she wants you to put it out."

"Tell her," says Bragg, "that this is a bar, not a damn church."

"Fine, Don."

Bragg pulls harder, his cigar begins pumping out smoke like an out-of-tune diesel tractor.

Bragg's godfather, Chico Clemente, who lives in Philadelphia, says, "There are people who think he's a big, crude out. To that I say, well, he is a little crude at times." A longtime friend, Al Cantello, the cross-country coach at the Naval Academy, thinks part of Bragg's problem is that he returned home after

continued

the Olympics with the "personality of a maggot." Yet, Cannello says, "Don is simply a maverick with vision."

*Through the ever testing life that
scares,
Leading us repetitiously thru our
nightmares.
What truly makes us stand erect;
Tis man's pursuit that gains him
respect.*

—HUNTER, by Bragg

There has always been evidence that Bragg is his own man. As a youngster he would take his own sawdust to meets to improve the pole-vault pits. At Villanova, while other students dived into the swimming pool from the diving board, Bragg headed in from the rafters. To prove something to himself, he once held a lighted cigar against his wrist; he wears the scar. These days, with minimum provocation, he'll plunge some 60 feet off the bridge over the Mullica River near his home. "I want to know if the fear will conquer me or I will conquer the fear," he says. "It's a challenge. Life is a challenge, so let's make it more exciting." Bragg's friend and business partner, Frank Ciko, says, "Don has excellent rapport—with himself. He just can't accept the fact he's 44."

Despite Bragg's Tarzan fixation, in his role as athletic director of Stockton College, he has created one of the top intramural programs in the nation.



"The toughest thing is competing in life when there's no clapping," Bragg says.

Bragg has written a book of poetry, *Reflections of Gold*. The author's name is given as (Tarzan) Don Bragg. Publishers were not impressed, so Bragg is having 5,000 copies published at his own expense. "Some of it is fair," says Bragg, "some is poor, and some is the work of a genius." If one were limited to a single descriptive adjective, "poor" would serve nicely.

*When asked too soon to try once more
We pass out upon the floor.*

—DISSIPATION, by Bragg

Even his friends find Bragg's literary work hard to defend. "Well, Don likes

it," Cantello says. "At first I thought it was a put-on. Some of it is very badly constructed. But he's absolutely without guile."

For his part, Bragg snorts, "I don't know one damn thing about iambic pentameter. But poetry has been made so confusing. What I want to do is write popular poetry that communicates. It's not literary and it's not classic. Sometimes when the substance was good but the rhythm wasn't, I still kept it." He confesses, however, that if he were not an Olympic champion, absolutely no one would take his poetry seriously. "But that doesn't mean it's not good," he says. He also says, "I'm a multidimensional guy who thinks and feels with the best of them." Bragg swaggers when he sits.

He quotes Greeley, Kipling and Socrates and uses the word "cognizant" a lot. He says—dead seriously—that "what I'm trying to do is find the key to the universe. I'm close, real close." And then he reflects, "I'm one in a million." For once Bragg might be underestimating himself.

The scene switches from the Pine Barrens to Studio 54 in Manhattan. Bragg is out on the sidewalk hollering, "Hey, I'm Don Bragg Olympic Champion. Tarzan. Remember me?" He is ignored. Finally, Bragg can't take it anymore. "Let's bust in," he says. "No faggot s.o.b. in a disco." He is persuaded to go elsewhere—not easily.

For everything that goes wrong, Bragg has a rationalization. Early on, he bought a record store, but grocery stores started selling records and ruined the business. He bought a tow truck, established an Olympic Credit Bureau and started repossessing cars, but he repossessed a car belonging to an organized-crime figure, and life became so dangerous—he was reportedly shot at—that he sold the business. He had a radio talk show, but it wasn't nasty enough. "Can you believe it?" says Bragg. "Me not nasty enough?"

And he built a camp—Kamp Olympik (Bragg's inspiration for the unique spelling came from the fact that he had been reading about the Celts—originally spelled Kelts) in New Gretna, N.J., close to where he now lives. He says he bought the property for \$40,000, sold it nine years later for \$250,000 and made

some money from it in the intervening years. But a kid almost drowned, and Bragg decided it wasn't worth it. He was a great pole vaulter, nearly getting to the magic 16-foot mark with a metal pole, but then they made the fiber-glass pole, and now his old records seem pitiful by comparison.

He would have been Tarzan, but every time a casting call went out, fate would eliminate him. Once he cut his foot on a broken bottle when he alit from a tree; another time he suffered a ruptured disc; another time there were legal problems; another time he was shot at when he dropped off another man's girl friend at her home.

He would have been a color man for network television at the '68 Olympics, but he got to messing with the Tarzan thing too much and missed out. He was a fine arm wrestler, but they went and developed a new style that involves the shoulder and the back, and Bragg could not adjust.

Not long ago, he and Ciko bought a bar in Margate, N.J., the Nickelodeon.

Terry says, "It's lovely."

Don: "Naw, it's a dive."

Terry: "It's a pleasant summertime hangout for kids."

Don: "Dive."

Terry: "It's the nicest bar in the area."

Don: "It's a dive."

They are losing money on it, trying to sell it. Ciko says, "All we wanted was a short-term roll-over. My God, now we both wear earplugs and clean up after kids throw up. It's beyond crazy."

Another friend of Bragg's, Gene Kilaroy, an executive in Las Vegas with the Dunes Hotel and a former member of Muhammad Ali's entourage, says, "Don's idea was to have a basketball court in back of the bar to attract the kids. But he was 10 years too late. Girls don't want to be around sweaty guys anymore. And besides, guys don't want to get sweaty." Times went and changed on Bragg. He would have played pro football but ... and he would have killed them on *The Superstars* but ... and on and on.

More than anything, Bragg is a pitchman for Bragg. He prides himself on talking his way into places where only ticket-holders are supposed to tread. "I know I'm arrogant, pompous and loquacious," he says. "I can't control it. But who would want to? It feels sooooo good. Besides, I think I'm a smart son of a bitch. So it's

good to take a shot in the head every once in a while."

*The thing that bothers me and makes me mad,
Is when I've been conned and I've
been had.*

—HUSTLER, by Bragg

Bragg owns 200 acres of property around his appropriately spectacular home. He wants to subdivide a good part of it for residential development, but he is being blocked by environmentalists. "If they don't let me develop my land," he says, "I'll get a bulldozer and a shotgun, and I'll plow over all these trees and all these creepy environmentalists. I'm not paying all this money so they can look at birds. They are my damn trees, and if they want my trees, they can pay for them. A man's home is his castle, and my land is my Ponderosa. I am not giving in."

Says Terry, "Whatever happens, Don won't die. Only the good die young."

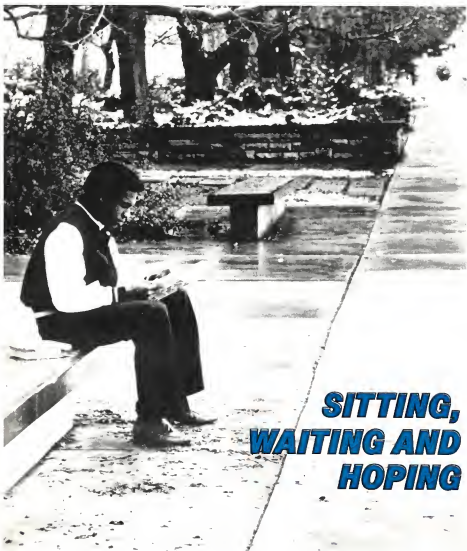
But for the current crop of young, the athletes who may find themselves with no Olympics to attend in 1980, Bragg may be an inspiration. He recalls that he was supposed to win a gold medal in 1956, but he failed to make the team because of an injury and a disputed miss in the Olympic Trials. Bragg hung on, kept training, kept slamming that unyielding metal pole into the box, absorbing the shock with his massive arms and shoulders, and leveraging himself up into the air. Four years later he had his gold.

Jim Tuppeny, Penn's truck coach, who was Bragg's pole-vauling mentor at Villanova in those days, says, "If these kids today are willing to work four more years, it can be done. The proof is Don."

Late one recent evening, Bragg is sitting in the sunken living room of his home ("I built it for \$120,000, and I'll bet it's worth \$350,000 now"). A gentle wind is blowing, and beyond a glass wall the waves on "Bragg's Lake" can be heard slapping the shore. "I'm like a flighty thoroughbred," he says. "I don't make a good pet. I know I'm an argumentative sort of person. But a man should have one foot on the ground and one foot off—one as an anchor, one for the need to be free. I want to live like I want to live, not how other people want me to live."

"Funny thing, though, I still don't know what I want to be."

END



**SITTING,
WAITING AND
HOPING**



Glenn Fletcher has played football at four high schools, two J.C.s and two universities. He has no diplomas or degrees, but he has dreams aplenty

by LARRY KEITH

All Glenn Fletcher has ever wanted out of life is the chance to play football. He has thought of little else since he was 13 years old and scoring touchdowns for a Pop Warner team in Pasadena. The dream has dominated his thinking and twisted his perspective, and it will not go away. "Football is my life," he says. "That's where my heart is set."

In pursuit of his dream, Fletcher has gone to four high schools, two junior colleges and two universities, Purdue and Utah State. Even now, at 23, with his NCAA eligibility used up and without the slightest hope of being chosen in April's NFL draft, he longs for one more year of college football at an NAIA school or a tryout with a pro team in Canada. Football, you see, is all Fletcher knows and all he cares about. It is his anchor and identity, because despite all of his years in academia he still hasn't graduated from high school and he is not even close to graduating from college.

Fletcher does have his memories, though, and nobody can take those away. When he was a junior at Pasadena High he gained 125 yards in one game. He also was a starter in the defensive backfield on two winning junior-college teams, College of the Siskiyous in Weed, Calif. and Pasadena City College. He intercepted three passes for Pasadena, returning one of them 80 yards for a touchdown. "That was beautiful," he says. "I always think about that."

Purdue was even better—while it lasted. After transferring there from Pasadena C.C. in 1979, he went through spring practice and won a starting position in the defensive backfield for the upcoming season. Furthermore, for the first time in his life he performed well in the classroom. But that spring, at the end of the semester, a review of his academic record showed that he lacked enough hours to be eligible under Purdue's rules, and he transferred to Utah State. In Logan he once again became a victim of bad luck and poor judgment. When he and a team-

mate were considering whether to crash a party, they were arrested for trespassing at the Sigma Nu fraternity house. (Fletcher served his eight-day jail sentence last month.) During the season he played on special teams and as a substitute. Academically, he was a washout.

Fletcher's life as a football nomad reveals a dark side of college athletics unknown to the average fan. Many administrators and coaches would have the public believe that their schools' teams are composed entirely of diligent, industrious "student-athletes." But as recent disclosures of transcript tampering and other academic improprieties at several schools show, some college officials are willing, even anxious, to accept and occasionally exploit "non-student-athletes" as well. Across America young men and women are routinely told that their only hope for a college athletic career depends on academic success in high school and beyond. But Fletcher and others like him are proof that this lofty standard is often ignored.

Glenn Robert Fletcher was born on Dec. 5, 1956 in Thibodaux, La., the fifth of nine children. When he was five, his family moved to Pasadena, where Glenn and his five brothers developed a special interest in athletics. Glenn's preference was football. When he entered John Mur High in 1971 he made the freshman team as a running back. He attended the school for only one semester, however, because he was caught pitching pennies outside the auditorium and was suspended. He finished the year at Foothill High and, the next fall, moved on to Pasadena High.

After the first week of preseason practice at Pasadena, Fletcher was promoted to the varsity. A few days later, however, he suffered a knee injury while trying to catch a pass, and he missed the entire season. In his junior year Glenn played in the offensive and defensive backfields for Pasadena, and his coach there, Tom Hamilton, recalls that Fletcher "did well and showed great potential." Hamilton says Glenn was unable to develop that potential the following year, because by then persistent truancy had made him ineligible. He spent the last year and a half of his high school career attending—or failing to attend—Granada Hills High, Foothill High (again), Pasadena High (again) and the Community Adult Training Center. He didn't receive a diploma, and along the way he made matters worse by getting into

continued

a fight in a bar and receiving an 18-month probationary sentence.

In discussing his past, Fletcher is open, saying he hopes others will learn from his mistakes. Recalling his chaotic high school days, he says, "I got on an ego trip. I said if they really want me to play they're going to give me some [academic] units. My brother Ned and my girl friend wanted me to go to class, but I wouldn't listen. I couldn't face reality. I'd blown my big chance, and it wasn't because people had taken it from me but because I'd thrown it away."

Fletcher's desire to play football remained as strong as ever. Although he knew he could not immediately go to a four-year university, he was aware that he could play at a junior college, as Ned and his brother Marcus had. California's community-college system is the largest in the nation, providing educational opportunities for anyone. A side effect of the system's openness is that it has also become a place where an athlete can earn his major-college eligibility without getting much of an education. A student does not even need a high school diploma to enroll in a junior college in California, or, for that matter, most states, and any state resident who enters a California community college is eligible to participate in the sports program as a freshman, provided he takes at least 12 semester hours. Aware of this, Fletcher wrote to coaches at five schools. When College of the Siskiyous responded, that was all the incentive he needed to pack up for Weed, 600 miles away. Unannounced and unknown, he made the squad as a starting defensive back in 1975.

"I didn't care what level of college it was," Fletcher says. "It was still college. I really felt good about being there. It felt good being in uniform again."

This enthusiasm did not carry over to the classroom. Fletcher attended class irregularly and withdrew after the season, receiving only one unit of credit for playing varsity football. Fletcher explains, "I was meeting people and seeing places I'd never seen before. It got the best of me." Siskiyous Coach Jim Ray was sorry to see Fletcher go. "Glenn was a good player, fast and strong," he says. "He was a nice quiet kid, and he worked hard."

It wasn't until the 1978 season that Fletcher played college football again. It took him that long to pass the 23 remaining hours of studies he needed to regain his junior-college eligibility.

A heavy dose of physical education courses like Advanced Body Building and Intercollegiate Sports at Pasadena City College helped Fletcher become eligible again. In the spring of 1978 he made the Pasadena team, but his visions of glory as a running back came to an end when he was assigned to the defense.

Two weeks before the season began, he broke a bone in his right hand, but he continued to play. "It hurt like hell," he says, "but one leg was going to have to fall off before I quit. Coach [Erik] Widmark gave me a pep talk. He said college guys and pros play like this every day."

So Fletcher played and played well, helping the team win the state championship and attracting the attention of recruiters from Colorado State, West Texas State, Nevada-Las Vegas and Purdue. According to Fletcher, Las Vegas made the most attractive offer. "I stayed at the Las Vegas Hilton on my visit," he says, "and even won a few dollars at the slot machines. One of the coaches talked about a job in the casino. He said all I had to do was sign. He said it would all be legal, too."

Legal or not, Fletcher chose the quiet of Purdue over the bright lights of Las Vegas. "I wanted to go there even before I visited," he says. "I'd heard of it, and I'd always wondered what it would be like." Fletcher accepted a scholarship and a challenge. "They told me if I didn't go to class I wouldn't play," he says. He entered Purdue in the spring of 1979.

Although Fletcher most certainly had proved himself worthy as a player, it is difficult to understand how Purdue or any university would approve of him academically. His Pasadena transcript from the spring of 1977 through the fall of 1978 shows that he received grades in 15 courses: Fs in English Essentials and Afro-American to 1865, D in Reading Skills, C in Tax-Return Preparation, B in vocational printing class and P (Passing) in an Experience Learning Seminar. His other nine grades were As in physical education. No math, no science, no foreign language and only one course each in English and history.

Nevertheless, Fletcher met the official—and unofficial—criteria for acceptance at Purdue and other major schools: he met the NCAA's minimum academic requirements and he was a recruited athlete. Never mind the nature of his junior-college courses or the absence of a high

school diploma. Under one provision of NCAA rules, a J.C. transfer doesn't need a high school diploma if other grade and hour requirements are satisfied.

A member of the Purdue admissions office says, "Technically, Fletcher satisfied the transfer requirement... because he padded it [his curriculum] with physics courses. But there can be another factor, too, although I'm not saying it happened in Fletcher's case because I'm not familiar with it. But sometimes you run into pressure from coaches who say, 'We need this guy. We'd rather have him playing for us than against us.'"

Fletcher justified Purdue's remarkable good faith by doing the academic work expected of him. Of course, his classes showed that Purdue was expecting less of him than of other business-management majors, but that is also true of the courses he would later take at Utah State, where his major was business administration. At both schools the courses he was guided toward reflected a greater concern for his football eligibility than his degree requirements. More difficult courses such as banking, security analysis, financial strategy and accounting would come later, if at all.

Fletcher did so well at Purdue that his parents didn't believe him when he told them his grades. They weren't convinced until they received them in the mail: A in Minority Problems and Advanced Football Coaching, B in U.S. Since 1877, Art and Design and Contemporary Problems in Personal Finance for Minorities and C in Study Skills Seminar. Aside from the fact that these are far from the toughest courses offered at Purdue, Fletcher succeeded for three reasons: mandatory study halls, close monitoring of his academic progress and, for once, his wanting to do well. "I really was happy," he says. "Purdue was where I wanted to be."

Unfortunately, Fletcher would not be there very long. According to Bob King, Purdue's academic counselor for athletics, the coaching staff did not know when Fletcher was recruited that he had attended College of the Siskiyous in 1975. King says that fact was not discovered until Fletcher's Siskiyous transcript was received late in the semester. Because Fletcher had been in school in 1975, for eligibility purposes he would be a senior, which meant he needed 84 semester hours of credit to suit up in the fall instead of the 54 required of a junior. And when Purdue found it could not use

Fletcher as an athlete, it didn't show that much interest in helping him continue as a student.

By the time Fletcher's status had been sorted out, the semester was over and he was home in Pasadena, eagerly awaiting the fall football season. His hopes disappeared when Assistant Coach Leon Burnett, the man who had recruited him for Purdue, called to tell Fletcher he would not be eligible to play for the Boilermakers and that his athletic scholarship would be revoked.

"Purdue was the only place where I was ever a student-athlete," says Fletcher. "I was really upset. As far as I'm concerned, that was just a wasted semester. If I'd known what was going to happen I would've gone to Nevada-Las Vegas."

To Burnett's credit, he continued to show concern for Fletcher even though he was no longer a Purdue athlete. Burnett arranged a summer job for him as a clerk at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena and made inquiries that led to his transfer to Utah State in Logan. Fletcher would not have a scholarship, but at least he would have a chance to prove himself again. Utah State accepted Fletcher because it was then one of the few schools in the country that did not require transfers to sit out a year. Utah State had recently joined the Pacific Coast Athletic Association and the league had waived the transfer rule for State that year, according to football Coach Bruce Snyder. The only catch was that under NCAA rules a transfer student would not be eligible to participate in a bowl game, but Utah State was not expecting a bowl bid, anyway.

Even without a scholarship, Fletcher thought he could get by with a Basic Education Opportunity Grant, a well-intentioned but easily abused federal program that had paid for his expenses at Siskiyou and had given him pocket money at Purdue. But that, like everything else about his stay at Utah State, went sour, too. He did not receive all the government money he was counting on, so he still owes the school \$572.

Fletcher also came up short on the football field, where he was unable to earn a starting position. His biggest problem was that his late entry into the program—he had, after all, missed spring practice—made it difficult for him to pick up the Aggies' defensive strategies and techniques. Although Fletcher did earn a letter, Snyder says, "He just wasn't good

enough to start. I knew he was trying to take his last shot, but a team is usually set coming out of spring practice. I'll say one thing for him, though. It would have been easy for him to pout and be a malcontent and blame others, but he didn't. He was a good guy."

Fletcher may have controlled his despair on the football field, but he lost his newfound determination in the classroom. Disheartened by his lack of playing time, he did his schoolwork poorly—or not at all. In one course, American Civilization, he let another student write some papers for him, and soon after the season ended, Fletcher withdrew from school.

Despite everything that has happened to him, Fletcher still persists in the belief, or at least the hope, that there is foot-

ball to them to think about the pros. It's not just the athlete's problem. There's a system that's been created that encourages them to think it's possible."

This situation is often only apparent to those on the outside, to people like Bridgette Saladino, a friend of Fletcher's who is a senior psychology major with a 3.5 average at Utah State. Saladino says that Fletcher is "extremely perceptive, sensitive and caring," and adds, "I know you have to say that he screwed up, because he has, but I'd like to see him described as a neat human being, a nice person to be around." Despite that glowing appraisal, she admits, "I don't pity him, though. The decisions he has made have been his own. What he needs now is that slap, that slap of reality that he's not going to play pro



Though his NCAA eligibility is used up, Fletcher stays in shape, hoping for a shot in the NAIA or CFL.

ball in his future. "Another year of college football at an NAIA school would be good for me," he says. "And I feel I can play pro ball, too, if I put on a few pounds, because I have experience and speed. And I definitely think I have the ability. There's no question about that."

This kind of thinking is common enough among college athletes. "It's a sad commentary that so many are planning to go on to pro ball rather than to get their degree," says Snyder. "We've al-

lowed them to think about the pros. It's not just the athlete's problem. There's a system that's been created that encourages them to think it's possible."

Fletcher is not willing to face that reality now. Last week he was hanging around Logan, staying in shape, planning to go to a tryout camp for the British Columbia Lions. Even when he says, "I better quit jiving around and get down to business," it is easy to see what he has in mind. Doesn't anyone understand? Glenn Fletcher is a football player. 

FOR THE NBA, REVIVAL MEANS SURVIVAL



WITH RUSS BACK ON THE AIR, MUS IS MAKING LESS OF A FUSS

It isn't always how you're doing so much as how people perceive you're doing. Take the CBS telecasts of NBA games this season. To be sure, things are on the upbeat from the gloom and doom of last year, when there was much public hand-wringing about the league's future on TV. But the odd thing about this turnaround, according to Chock Milton, the executive producer of pro basketball for CBS, is that "the ratings are up this season, but they aren't up as much as the media would have you believe."

The 1979-80 NBA telecasts started off well with the infusion of new stars (notably Larry Bird and Magic Johnson), slumped in the ratings when the Winter Olympics dominated the airwaves and continued to slide when the pros started to compete with the hoop and la of the NCAA tournament on NBC. In fact, the colleges have moved ahead in the overall Sunday ratings—they led 7.1 to 6.0 at the end of last weekend—though the networks are tied 5-5 in hoops after having gone head to head 10 times. Nonetheless, the NBA's ratings are up 16% over last year, and the pros expect to get even higher numbers in the playoffs.

The fact that CBS and NBC are splitting the basketball audience explains why neither the pros nor the colleges are on top of the ratings. That honor belongs to the series of trashpot "events" like Superstars that ABC has put on in the same Sunday afternoon slot that the other networks have used for

their battle of the baskets.

Certainly, the pro basketball telecasts are better this season than they have been in recent years. After the NBA's 26% drop last season—the colleges, with Bird, Johnson et al., led the pros 8.3 to 5.1 in the pre-NBA playoff ratings—the league and CBS made some significant changes. They moved up the starting time of the games so that NBC didn't retain its head start with the audience; they canned regional coverage in favor of national telecasts, featuring Boston with Bird

and Los Angeles with Johnson, to best showcase the sport; they scheduled "fresh" teams—i.e., those that hadn't played the night before—for TV games; and they promoted the telecasts more aggressively. CBS has enhanced the NBA's image by doing more interviews with players and using taped highlights at halftime—instead of the hokey one-on-one and H-O-R-S-E games of past seasons.

Most important, CBS brought back Bill Russell. Russell, who did the color commentary for three seasons when ABC telecast NBA games, has added substance to the CBS coverage. He is an interesting man, and he says interesting things. Though he could enunciate better—a shortcoming that might be alleviated by turning his volume higher—he has a way of making listeners feel that they are getting inside stuff. And the fact that he was the best player ever to perform in the NBA lends authority to whatever he says.

When Seattle was in a dry spell during a recent game against Boston, Russell noted that the Sonics had stopped getting the fast-break opportunities they had been enjoying earlier.

"That's because the Celtics aren't missing the kind of shots that set up such opportunities," he said, "and because foul situations have forced the Sonics to go to lineups that don't include their best fast-break combinations."

Russell's observations that "a lot of centers put the ball on the floor a lot when they are nervous, and that gives the defense more

chances to steal the ball" and that "when Bird is playing some of his best basketball, he sometimes will go four minutes without taking a shot" are the kind of comments that have enhanced the CBS coverage.

Russell isn't afraid to be silent, and he laughs a lot while kidding with his co-announcers, Brent Musburger and the irrepressible Hot Rod Hundley. This offends some purists, but, Milton says, "An average fan tuning in might get the feeling, 'Those guys are having fun. I'd like to listen to them.'"

The general view in the NBA and at CBS is that this year's improvement is merely a start. Boston's resurgence is important because the Celtics are the closest thing to a national team in the NBA. The big TV markets are important, so Los Angeles' rebirth is significant. But the league won't let full stride until there is a revival of the Knicks, with the huge New York audience, and the Bulls, with the big numbers Chicago can provide.

Musburger, who has toned down the cheer-leading that earned him ridicule last season, says, "With all the criticism last year about the NBA having no TV future, you began to wonder if the game really isn't dull, if it isn't all decided in the last five minutes, if the players don't have a strict take-the-money-and-run attitude. It has been different this year. I feel that the athletes understood they had to contribute. There is a subtle black-and-white issue here. I think the big stars have come to feel there are a lot of kids on the playgrounds of the big cities who need the same opportunity they had. It's not that pro ball is the answer for most black kids, but the players realize they have a pretty good thing, and they don't want that door closed on those kids. I also think the players have tried harder in the games televised nationally."

In 1978 CBS shelled out \$74 million for the rights to the NBA for four years. The league and the network say publicly that the up-and-down ratings are no cause for alarm, but it's obvious the NBA will have to do better in the ratings in order to command a lucrative new TV deal in 1982. There is reason, however, to believe the cautious optimism expressed by Musburger. "I think the people at CBS consider the NBA to be a marketable product. I'm not so sure that was the feeling last year." **END**



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Paul Cannell, an English forward now with the Memphis Rogues, was sitting in the bar of the Bay Harbor Inn in Tampa one recent evening. The Rogues were in spring training, and Cannell, who is famed for dropping his shorts when referees make calls against him, as well as for his amazing ability to head the ball, was pondering the future of the league.

"I give the NASL two years," he said. "You can't say that soccer's arrived anymore. It's here. But you can't claim that it's a major sport either. It's on some sort of plateau, and if it doesn't get up and dance this time I don't think the public will stay interested. It needs something new and fresh."

He drank deeply, sighed and reconsidered, wondering just what that something could be. Finally his eyes lit up. "Elephants!" he exclaimed. "Penguins! The Village People!" Overcome with his vision and grinning maniacally, Cannell lunged across an empty stool and bit a Yugoslavian teammate on the ear. The Yugoslav said "ouch" and other things in Croatian.

"Ah, you don't play soccer with your ear," Cannell told him.

Across town Tony Field, a gracefully aging English forward who also plays for Memphis, sat quietly watching a midgest fiddler in a country and western band. "This whole thing reminds me of the NASL," he said. "Somebody too small trying to play too fast."

Ready to launch its 14th season next Saturday, the NASL again seems poised for moderate success. Its 24 franchises are relatively stable, and attendance increased by 8% in 1979. There are no expansion, relocated or failed teams to cloud the prospects for this season. ABC this year will televise six games (this is a pro-rata decline as the league will play 32 games this year vs. 30 last season), plus one playoff game and the Soccer Bowl, the NASL championship game. "Stability and steady growth will characterize the league this year," says NASL Commissioner Phil Woosnam.

Fine. But where are the elephants? Some of the glitter, some of the madness that made the league colorful as it bat-

A modified American plan

Americanization—three North Americans on the field instead of two—is the new buzzword in the NASL. It might add a little pizzazz to a league that could use some

ted for a foothold on the pro sports scene seems gone. It's almost as if NASL players are getting ready to imitate their betters in the NFL by arriving in locker rooms wearing three-piece suits and carrying attaché cases. But hold on, chaps. Your league still must face—and overcome—a number of tough challenges before it can declare itself to be a gift-edged success.

Foremost, says Johan Cruyff, is the question of Americanization. Cruyff is a Dutchman, the world's No. 1 soccer player, who came to the Los Angeles Aztecs at midseason last year, doubled the gate there and won the league's MVP award. "It angered the owners and the general managers when I told them at the MVP

ceremony that the NASL is failing to Americanize the game," he says. "They won't have farm clubs or reserve-team schedules. As a cost-cutting move, some colleges are reducing their schedules. Pretty soon no one will be able to afford foreigners. If you bring up your own talent, you don't pay transfer fees. And, besides, in a few years who's going to come and see old stars like me play?"

The 32-year-old Cruyff found himself on the block last month when the new Mexican owners of the Aztecs refused to honor the second season of his high-priced two-year contract. Cruyff was unloaded to Washington, the Gulf + Western-backed Diplomats reportedly having paid almost one million to the Aztecs and

continued



When it comes to converting the infant of the new three-man rule, naturalization is a nature!

having given Cruyff a three-year, \$1.5 million contract. Hailed a year ago as the savior of Los Angeles and the six other West Coast franchises, Cruyff's job now is to save soccer in the nation's capital.

The Americanization issue centers on the league's new rule requiring that three North Americans—either Canadian or U.S. citizens—be on the field at all times. Last year the number was two. In 1979, four North Americans had to be dressed for each game; this year the number will be six—or an increase of 48 league-wide. If nothing else, a lot more U.S. or Canadian players will be collecting salaries and splinters while they sit on the bench.

"It's the year of the North American player," says Freddie Goodwin, president of the Minnesota Kicks. "But we can't move it along too fast or we'll lose quality. However, I think when owners and coaches see the quality of the native players this season, they'll not be so afraid."

Three weeks ago, as reporters gathered in the Cosmos' Giants Stadium dressing room before the team departed on a preseason tour of South America, Italian-born striker Giorgio Chinaglia counted media heads. Across the aisle from his locker was Rick Davis, the best North American-born player in the game today. In the past, most reporters crowded around Chinaglia to hear his pronouncements on the Cosmos. This day there were more notebooks, pencils and tape recorders around Davis. Chinaglia went into a Cosmic pout—one silent vote against Americanization. The irony is that Chinaglia is a naturalized American.

Through trades the Cosmos wound up with four of the league's top nine draft choices, including the top pick, Don Ebert of NCAA-champion Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. They also acquired last year's No. 3 and No. 5 picks, Larry Hulcer of St. Louis University and Angelo DiBernardo of Indiana, plus 1979 All-Star defender Bruce Wilson from Chicago. But most teams have scrambled for lesser Americans in a maze of drafts and trades even a commodities broker couldn't untangle. The rush to stockpile experienced, solid native players has driven prices sky-high.

Says player agency executive Dick Luppi, "Last season an American with

two or three years' experience in the league got \$18,000 or so. This season, with the third-man rule, the same player can command \$40,000."

Jim McAlister, a three-year veteran and 1977 rookie of the year for his hometown Seattle Sounders, was dealt this winter to Toronto. In response to feelers, the Blizzard reportedly set a price of \$200,000 for McAlister, a record for a U.S. player.

While NASL squads have enough



Stockpiled Americans are prime trading material

North Americans to choose from to fill out their rosters, the choice of the third starter for teams like Detroit, Houston, San Diego, 1979 Soccer Bowl runner-up Tampa Bay and a host of others will be a difficult one. For many, the third North American slot will be rotated until the right man can be found.

But there are signs of growing faith in American players. As recently as two years ago most clubs had a North American goalkeeper, that being the position on a team of skilled Europeans at which a North American could do the least damage. "A goalkeeper and an outside defender—that's the way it used to be," says U.S. Olympic and National Team Coach Walt Chyzowych, "but with three on the field, I think we'll see more American midfielders." Confidence in native-born players has increased enough so that many teams now have gone for English

or Continental goalies who are better at handling the crossing ball in the air.

With fewer than a dozen foreign loan players in the league this season, most rosters have remained relatively stable. A notable exception is the 1979 Soccer Bowl champion Vancouver Whitecaps, who are not quite ready to pay the price of success. English Goalie Phil Parkes, who had the best goals-against record in the NASL last season, this year demanded a three-year contract including \$580,000 in salary, a new car and three trips to England each season. He was sold to Chicago. A few more English players also made what Vancouver Team Manager Tony Walters considered unreasonable demands. "I can go to England and get six guys just as good as you for half what you're asking," he reportedly told them. And he got his new players, worth as yet undetermined.

The Portland Timbers estimate that they will spend three times what they did last year on players, reflecting a league average. Perhaps more significant, they have a new general manager, Peter Warner, an English Methodist minister who left his pulpit for the job. "I won't take unfair advantage of the league," he says. "I'll pray only as a last resort."

Washington Coach Gordon Bradley, a former Cosmos pilot who was dismissed after benching Chinaglia three seasons ago, guided his team to a 19-11 record last season. With the addition of Cruyff and another Dutchman, Wim Jansen, a solid midfielder who played on the Netherlands' 1974 and '78 World Cup entries, the Diplomats have the makings of a team capable of upsetting the Cosmos. But after his stint in New York, Bradley is in no haste to assemble a world-class bench. "We don't want a team of superstars," he says. "It doesn't work."

The Cosmos, however, remain the Cosmos. When the German season ends in June, Hennes Weisweiler will assume command of the least coachable squad in pro sports. Despite an oversupply of egotists, the Cosmos should play more brilliantly than ever. Not only do they have the core of the club that went 24-6 in 1979 and the best of the young Americans, but they also have obtained the services of two classy young South Amer-

icans—Jose Oscar Bernardi of Brazil and Julio Cesar Romero of Paraguay.

One sign that a sport feels it has arrived is when it starts thinking about a Hall of Fame, as the NASL is currently doing. It would also induct stars of the rival American Soccer League and the NCAA. It probably won't be as big as the Halls at Cooperstown or Canton, but the New Jersey Sports & Exposition Authority, operator of Giants Stadium, has already commissioned architects to come up with designs.

One can imagine some of the exhibits. In the Hall of Saviors would be busts of Pelé, Beckenbauer and Cruyff, plus the NASL press releases proclaiming that each of them would snatch the sport from the jaws of invisibility.

Another display would surely be Chinaglia's U.S. citizenship papers, with which he began the trend toward naturalization that's helping foreigners beat the Americanization rule. At least a dozen foreign players are now in the process of becoming U.S. citizens.

In the corner of Bush Productions would be last season's Philadelphia Fury media guide, which was published in time for the team's last home game.

The Lost For Words Exhibit would include the text of Edmonton Drillers' owner Peter Pocklington's speech last summer announcing, "The Drillers are a proud new entry into the NASL and are proud to compete for the..." Pocklington had no idea what his team was competing for. But as the owner of an NHL franchise, he knew it wasn't the Stanley Cup.

In the History of the Game section there would be a diorama depicting what happened when the St. Louis Stars' Pat McBride was suddenly smitten by an airport security person. Unable to attract her attention away from the X-ray screen she was watching, McBride quietly slipped onto the moving belt into the machine, scaring the attendant half to death when she saw a human skeleton on the screen. As he emerged on the other side, he whispered, "I love you."

And, given the toehold the NASL has on the American sports scene, it would be appropriate if over the door of the Hall of Fame were carved the memorable words of Edmonton Coach Hans Kraay when he faced reporters after his 8-22 season last summer: "Don't shoot me, boys, I'm playing the piano as fast as I can."

But where are the elephants? **END**

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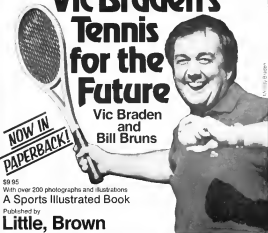
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New Avon lady came calling

This winter's top women's event was a ding-dong tournament for Tracy Austin

Just when Martina Navratilova thought she had the world by the tail, Tracy Austin, 17 years old going on 30, gutsy, determined and disciplined, scampered (Austin doesn't run, she scampers—fast) into her life and spoiled it all. Navratilova was ranked No. 1 for the second year in a row, she had won five of the six tournaments she had entered on the winter circuit, and she had breezed through her preliminary matches last week at the \$300,000 Avon Championships at Madison Square Garden without breathing hard. With Chris Evert Lloyd gone from the tennis scene, no one was asking her whether she thought she deserved to be No. 1. They were asking how it felt. "Wonderful," she said.

"I don't have to prove myself anymore."

Now that Austin, Navratilova's only rival, has won this winter's big one, a \$100,000 Avon first prize, people are going to begin asking Navratilova the same old questions all over again.

Although the final went to three sets, 6-2, 2-6, 6-2, which only three other matches did all week, it was fairly typical of the tournament. It was never close. The winner of each set dominated that set, and there were so many unforced errors that Austin later remarked, "It seemed like whoever made the first error won the point."

To beat Austin's nearly impenetrable baseline game, Navratilova, the serve-and-volleyer, had to make her first serves good, so that she could then attack the net. Against any player except Austin, Navratilova would have followed her second serve to the net as well, but she had too much respect for Austin's passing shots to take that chance. Thus, when her first serves failed—she

missed on 27 of 66—she was left at the baseline playing the game that Austin owns. Navratilova's other weapon, her mighty forehand, also failed. She made 20 unforced forehand errors and hit only four winners with it. Austin had 14. "The only place I could try to go with my forehand was crosscourt," said Navratilova afterward. "Tracy knew that and was always waiting for it."

There is a history of one-sided matches between these two. Since the beginning of 1979 they have met 14 times. Their only other three-

setter was the final of last year's Avon Championships, which Navratilova won 6-3, 3-6, 6-2. Their only truly close match was Austin's 7-5, 7-5 win in the semis of the U.S. Open last September.

When Austin was playing last week, her most loyal fans sat in the third row of a courtside box—Jeanne, her mother, Jeff, her brother, Sara Kleppinger, her business manager, and Donald Dell, Kleppinger's boss at Dell, Craghill, Fentress & Benton of Washington, D.C., the agency that also handles Arthur Ashe, Roscoe Tanner and Stan Smith. Others, such as Ted Tinling, the designer of Austin's dresses, came and went. But always present was Robert Lansdorp, her coach.

Lansdorp is Dutch by birth, grew up in Indonesia and Holland, and immigrated to the U.S. in 1960. He is a big man of 40 with ice-blue eyes, a deeply tanned face and a voice that carries across several courts. He has been Austin's coach, first at Jack Kramer's club and then at his own, for 10 years. Despite that long association, Austin also enlisted the coaching services of Roy Emerson shortly before the 1979 U.S. Open. During the tournament Emerson sat with Austin's entourage, and when she won and the media were trying to mine her short history for its few nuggets, Emerson, the Aussie tennis hero of the '60s, made a better story than Lansdorp did. As a result, Lansdorp thought he hadn't received his share of the credit for creating the youngest Open champion in history. Lansdorp endured this indignity until the Colgate Series Championships in January, when Austin lost to Navratilova 6-2, 6-1. He quit, and Austin lost to Navratilova again, 6-2, 6-0, at the Avon tournament in Los Angeles, her home ground. She also lost to Greer Stevens 6-0, 6-4 in the quarterfinals of the Avon tournament in Houston.

Last week Lansdorp was part of the team again. In fact, he was the team. Emerson remained in California. "It has been proved to me over the last two months that my presence makes all the difference," said Lansdorp, following his pupil's 6-3, 6-1 semifinal win over Bill

continued



Austin took home a silver trophy and the first prize of \$100,000

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Canadian Club
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lie Jean King. "Tracy's game has been half what it should be. It is knowing her game, knowing what to tell her, knowing how to get her to play up to her best, it's being there for her confidence, telling her what to do. For her to play 100% she needs me 100%. Even more than before I feel that I am 100% responsible, and I feel very good about it. I am even more eager now. I feel she can be the greatest ever."

Austin's young face, with its very straight teeth and deep-set blue eyes, seemed to reflect Landsdorf's confidence all week. She didn't say a lot, but she smiled a good deal. Once a reporter, trying to pry something pithy out of her, got a rise—though not the one he had hoped for—when he asked if it bothered her to think that there was a country full of "nasty young players out there" getting ready to do her in.

"Don't call them nasty," snapped Austin. "Why do you call them nasty?" she insisted.

"I was joking," said the reporter.

"Oh," said Austin.

Navratilova's confidence was high, too, and with good reason. Her game seems to have reached the promised land. Her mastery of the serve-and-volley style of play is complete. Evonne Goolagong said of her last week, "Her aggressiveness throws me off a bit. She just charges the net, and I think to myself, 'Here she comes!'" When Navratilova filtered, which she did when she dropped a set to Goolagong in the semis, it was her serve that hurt her most. But she didn't panic as she might have a couple of years ago. Instead, she broke Goolagong's serve in the second game of the third set, thereby seizing the momentum, and ran out the match 6-0. "I felt that I'd lost that [second] set, not that she'd beaten me, so I thought, I'm not going to do that anymore," Navratilova said.

The day after her Colgate Series Championships victory over Austin that decided the No. 1 ranking for 1979, Navratilova said, "Last night was as close to perfection as I can play. I think I want to still get better, but I don't know if I can."

Adding to Navratilova's feelings of well-being are factors outside the game. Her parents, who arrived in the U.S. in December, have now settled in Dallas, in a house three doors away from her own. She has recently signed up with Mark McCormack's International Man-

agement Group, a decision that will probably improve her financial situation considerably over the next few years. Though she intends to keep her base in Dallas, she recently purchased, for an estimated \$450,000, a 27-room house on eight acres of land in fox-hunt country near Charlottesville, Va. "It's a place to get away from everything," she says. "It's on a hill surrounded by trees and grass, and from it you can see the Blue Ridge Mountains. It reminds me of Czechoslovakia. That's how I fell in love with it."

Navratilova's intellectual growth is keeping pace with her tennis. "I'm interested in literature and art," she says. "I don't watch TV much anymore. I'd rather see a good movie or a play." While she was in New York, staying—as befits a First Lady—at the Carlyle Hotel on upper Madison Avenue, instead of at the Essex House or the St. Moritz where the rest of the contestants were housed, she managed to see two plays and an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in addition to playing in a tennis tournament.

Eas are never so tidily delineated as historians and sportswriters would like them to be, but if they were, women's open tennis could be divided into three periods—the Margaret Court-King era, the Goolagong-Evert era and now the Navratilova-Austin era. Of course, Goolagong's best years actually preceded Evert's; and Navratilova in fact became an ominous cloud on Evert's competitive horizon long before Austin ever played with grown-ups; and King, after 15 years, still stands astride the sport like a talkative Colossus of Rhodes. Nevertheless, Navratilova at 23 and Austin at 17 are the heirs, apparently, now that Evert is gone. They are ranked 1 and 2, respectively, and they lose to each other (Austin losing more often than Martina, so far) but rarely to anyone else. The 11 tournaments on this year's Avon circuit produced only three winners—Navratilova with five victories, Austin with four and King with two. King, who claims to be in better physical shape at 36 than she was at 22, despite her patchwork knees, can, on a given day, still play brilliantly, as she did when she upset Navratilova to win the Avon tournament in Houston a month ago.

Another surprising spoiler lately has been Goolagong, who returned to contention when she won the U.S. Indoor

title last fall after two years of injuries that at times seemed certain to end her career prematurely. She didn't win on the Avon circuit, but she reached the finals three weeks in a row, and fans as well as promoters welcomed her with open arms.

In the second round, amid a wetter of lopsided matches, Goolagong and Austin played a three-setter, with a tie-breaker in the third, that was truly glorious to behold. Goolagong fielded virtually everything Austin threw at her, making one acrobatic retrieve after another. She stroked shoestring volleys for winners and feathered drop shots that had her young opponent lunging and squeaking. (Austin doesn't grunt—yet.) In the end, Austin's consistency and tenacity won out, 6-1, 4-6, 7-6, but it was Goolagong's virtuosity that made the evening.

Depth is the hot issue in women's tennis at the moment. The boosters say that new talent is rampant and that players such as Andrea Jaeger, 14, Kathy Horvath, 14, and Hana Mandlikova, 18, will soon be reaching the seams and upsetting the established players. The critics say that the talent may be there, but that by the time it begins to surface everyone will have perished from the boredom of watching preordained finals between Navratilova and Austin. Either way, with Evert Lloyd gone, 1980 is a year of transition. Possibly '81 and '82 will be, too. But Jaeger has already served notice that she soon will be a force. She reached the semifinals in her second major tournament as a pro, in January in Seattle, upsetting Rosie Casals, Wendy Turnbull and Sue Barker before losing to Austin 6-2, 6-2.

So maybe the boosters are right. Significantly, or symbolically, it was on the day of that semifinal match in Seattle that Evert Lloyd, who had the flu, withdrew. She was the first seed, and she was scheduled to play Virginia Wade at 6 p.m. The organizers, faced with what they feared might be a riot, quickly threw together an exhibition between Wade and Pam Shriver and then announced to the 10,500 customers at the Seattle Center that Evert Lloyd wouldn't play.

"There was a sort of sigh," says Mary Gibbons, one of Avon's touring staff, "and two people asked for their money back, but the rest were there, we realized, to see Jaeger and Austin, the kid versus the kid."

The town's toddlin' again

Chicago Black Hawk fans were turned off when Bobby Hull took off and the team became dull, dull, dull, but with a new coach and new spirit, the old crowds are back

If the most surprising hockey team this winter has been America's, then surely the second most astonishing is Chicago's. After six seasons of going nowhere, the Black Hawks—a club that had varicose veins, needed a heart transplant and had become as dull as it once was exciting—are tied with Minnesota for fifth place in the 21-team National Hockey League. Better still, in a city where the late Mayor Daley used to have the only team that won regularly, sports fans are again crowding cavernous Chicago Stadium, where scalpers had once thrived, only to be rendered obsolete by the scads of empty seats since the defection of Bobby Hull to Winnipeg in 1972.

Last Sunday night, 15,927 hyped-up fans watched the Black Hawks rally to beat the Atlanta Flames 4-2 as Grant Mulvey scored two goals within 16 seconds late in the third period. So psyched were the victory-starved Chicagoans that, with the score tied 2-2 and less than four minutes to play, they arose during a stop in play and applauded wildly, hoping to motivate their team. A standing ovation for a face-off. Whatever, it worked, Mulvey scoring the winning goal at 16:20—and beating Goalie Don Boucharde again at 16:36.

One of the main reasons for Chicago's renaissance is Tom Lysiak, a gifted center who last March was the principal in an eight-player trade with the Flames. Lysiak was the Atlanta captain, boy wonder, No. 1 heartthrob, most recognizable player and finest talent. He also was an enigma, some nights superb, other nights a flameout.

"I lost my confidence," Lysiak says. "I started to think that I might not be that good, that the potential they drafted me for really wasn't there. Plus, there

was a lot of pressure on me. They made me the captain, which I didn't want to be, and kept telling me I was the franchise, which I didn't want to hear. I wanted to be just another guy. They expected me to do everything, from collecting money from the players for the Christmas party to selling season tickets."

Still, after not scoring a goal in his first month as a Black Hawk—"the fans didn't boo me because I think they felt sorry for me"—Lysiak visited Atlanta

during the spring and openly yearned for a return to the Flames. He said he would take a pay cut just to get out of Chicago.

"Now I love the Black Hawks and don't want to leave for anything," he says. "We have a system of play on the ice. I've learned to relax, and I've become a more rounded player. I finally feel like maybe I've arrived."

Indeed, Lysiak, a 26-year-old bachelor who has purchased a condo near the neon lights of Rush Street, scores (23 goals); he choreographs (37 assists); he plays both ends; and he plays it tough. He remains a heartthrob, too. Signs such as WE LUV YOU, TOMMY now adorn the stadium balcony, where once BRING BACK BOBBY HULL bed sheets flew.

Ah, Bobby Hull. After last summer's NHL merger with the World Hockey Association, there was every reason to believe The Golden Jet would return to the rink of his greatest triumphs *continued*



Rookie Coach Johnstone stresses cameraderie, communication and pride to Hawks like Murray

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for a lost hurrah. However, the Black Hawks had neglected to protect one of Chicago's most beloved professional athletes ever; they failed to negotiate a deal with the Winnipeg Jets, who then repossessed the 41-year-old Hull even though they had no plans for him. (He recently was sold to Hartford.)

What Winnipeg wanted for Hull was either Terry Ruskowski or Rich Preston, both of whom had played for the Jets last season. Ruskowski, a center, had been reclaimed in June by the Black Hawks, who held his NHL rights, and Preston, a winger, signed with Chicago as a free agent.

"The easiest thing for us to do would have been to give one of them back," said Chicago President Bill Wirtz. "Everybody was clamoring for Bobby Hull, and nobody knew who these two kids from Winnipeg were. Except us. With all due respect for Bobby, we had two players who would be with us for 10 years. You don't trade the family jewels."

In retrospect, the non-trade looks golden for Chicago. Ruskowski, once an enfant terrible, has succeeded Keith Magnuson as team captain and spiritual leader and become the Black Hawks' front man in the infighting, while Preston has played both wings with excellence, if not with a whole lot of panache.

Earlier this season Ruskowski, 25, and Preston, 27, joined Mulvey, 23, to form the RPM Line, one of the NHL's most productive. Mulvey, a sinewy right wing who never had scored more than 19 goals in his five NHL seasons, has gotten 37 this season. "Terry and Rich were the best things that ever happened to me," he says. The line was later split up as part of Coach Eddie Johnston's search for scoring balance, but Ruskowski still leads the team in points with 65, Preston has 30 goals and Mulvey is sniffing at 40.

The rest of the Hawks' attack is less imposing, but a vastly underlarded defense, anchored by Goaltender Tony Esposito, makes amends. Esposito, certainly the most durable and probably the top goalie in the NHL, has starred for a decade despite migraine headaches, jangled nerves and broken bones. He has a crack in his left hand right now, but leads the NHL in wins (29) and shutouts (6) and has a fine 2.90 goals-against average.

"Tony's better than good," says Defenseman Bob Murray. "He's unbelievable." Murray is a member of the anonymous backline that has helped the

Hawks maintain the NHL's third-best goals-against mark. He, Doug Wilson, Mike O'Connell and rookie Keith Brown are all highly mobile, and Johnston, who was a Boston teammate of Bobby Orr's for seven seasons, has encouraged them to rush the puck, not just pass it.

But Johnston, the nonplaying hero of the team's rebirth, doesn't confine his teachings to the defense. He has coerced the Hawks into becoming more aggressive, more involved. Chicago's lack of offense—the Hawks have scored just 217 goals, 20th in the 21-team NHL—demands that it continue along safety-first lines, but no longer is the team a plotting, plodding, dump-and-pray bunch playing cocoon hockey.

Employing that former style, last year's spineless Black Hawks were a travesty, particularly away from home, where they had an 11-24-5 record. Early this month the new Hawks completed a 3-0-2 road trip, their best since 1971, and Johnston detected a personality trait long absent behind the Indian Head.

"Pride," he said. "We were down 3-0 in Los Angeles on our last game of the trip, but we didn't parachute. We came back and tied the Kings 3-3. That showed me something. We have pride, confidence, a system—and one other thing. We're having fun. You got to have fun. When I came here as a player two years ago, the dressing room was a morgue. When practice was over, players couldn't wait to get out. It was like somebody yelled 'Fire!' But to win, you've got to be together. Now, it's like my old days in Boston. One guy goes for a beer, all 20 guys go."

Make that 21. Whenever the Black Hawks have a team function, Eddie is welcome. Indeed, Johnston, an NHL goalie for 16 seasons, has achieved the ultimate in his rookie coaching year—the players not only respect him, they like him. "Eddie treats us like men because he is a man," says Esposito. "No drudgery. It's not aggravation to come to the rink anymore."

So, camaraderie and communication have replaced tension and apprehension in the Hawks' clubhouse. Ruskowski and Preston each played five seasons in the WHA, but they are constantly jabbed about being in their first year of pro hockey. One Hawk even suggested the WHA refugees are genuine candidates for NHL Rookie of the Year honors. Mike Veisor, Esposito's backup, is chided daily for be-



Lysak, battling a Nordique, has found a home

ing a Jewish goalie instead of a Jewish owner. And no longer do the Hawks ask for the "no smiling" section when they board a plane.

Johnston coached the Hawks' New Brunswick affiliate last season and was named to succeed Bob Pulford as Chicago's coach in September, with Pulford concentrating on his GM duties. Pulford admittedly "bit off more than I could chew" three years ago when he signed as both G.M. and coach, after coaching the L.A. Kings for five seasons. A spartan coach, Pulford's idea of a "reward" was putting one case of beer for the whole team on a bus bound for Philadelphia after a game in Madison Square Garden. All 24 cans would be consumed halfway through the Lincoln Tunnel.

"The Black Hawks skate, they have spirit and they have Esposito," says Philadelphia's Bobby Clarke. "They could be trouble in the playoffs." If so, it will be the first time in over a century Chicago has lost 16 straight Stanley Cup games, an on-going NHL record.

"Something good is happening here," promises Ruskowski. "We could be the New York Rangers of the '80 playoffs. Watch." Whatever you say, Terry. **END**



A DIFFERENT DRUMMER

After years of moody introspection, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is coming out of his shell. But whether at home, as here, or on a basketball court or in a roller disco, he still steps to the music he hears

by John Papanek



It happened on a perfectly beautiful Southern California afternoon following nine straight days of devastating mid-February rains. Nearly 16,000 Los Angeles went indoors—and on a Sunday, no less—to watch a basketball game. Moreover, it was a game between the Lakers and the Houston Rockets, which lets you know straight off that it wasn't a particularly big one, except that playoff time was near and it had been many years since the Lakers were fun to watch.

The P.A. announcer for The Forum, Larry McKay, was informing the crowd that the great Laker center, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, had called in sick with migraines. No one booed. In other years the fans would have hooted the roof off the Fabulous Forum and a dozen beach-bound Mercedes would have piled up at a parking-lot exit. Some sportswriters, with wicked glee, would have seized the opportunity to blast a favorite target for showing once more that he cared for nothing and no one except himself. And at least one would have begun typing: "The Lakers' 16-game home winning streak came to a s-Kareeming halt yesterday because Kareem Abdul-Jabbar rolled over in bed and said, 'Not today. I have a headache.'"

But no one wrote anything of the sort. On this Sunday afternoon the working-stiff Lakers, without their leader, slopped through two and a half periods, somehow staying barely ahead of Houston. Then a second remarkable thing happened. The crowd suddenly went berserk. Standing ovation. Players on the floor froze in mid-fast break. Abdul-Jabbar had arrived. He had tried to sneak to the bench inconspicuously, an attempt foredoomed by his 7' 2" height. (Officially he is 7' 2", his lady friend Cheryl Pistono says he is closer to 7' 5".)

Abdul-Jabbar entered the game immediately and swatted five Rocket shots out of the air. He rebounded ferociously, passed with élan and hit six of the seven shots he took, two of them "sky hooks" over Moses Malone, who a year earlier had seemed ready to end Abdul-Jabbar's 10-year reign as the most dominant player in the sport. Of course the Lakers won. The score was 110-102.

"I knew it was too good to be true," moaned Houston Coach Del Harris. "Bringing in Kareem is like wheeling out nuclear weapons."

"Is Kareem better than Malone?" the Rockets' Rick Barry was asked. "What kind of ridiculous question is that?" Barry said. "Kareem is probably the best athlete in the world."

The fans at The Forum wouldn't have disagreed. Their Lakers were about to overtake Seattle, and they were considered the No. 1 contender to unseat the defending champions because, at 32, Abdul-Jabbar was playing like a kid again, having his finest season in five as a Laker. He was playing with vitality and emotion, leading fast breaks, dunking with authority, slapping palms and occasionally—you could be sure because he had finally gotten rid of those infernal goggles after four years—smiling. And he had not missed a single game.

In the Lakers' dressing room Abdul-Jabbar sat in front of his locker. Usually he is in the shower before the press arrives, dresses before he is totally dry and dashes out, saying as little as possible, as though he has a bus to catch. This day he sat there, and the media people approached him as they always do—verry carefully.

Someone asked him how he felt, and he began to answer. In an instant he was mobbed.

"I haven't had a migraine bad enough to make me miss a game in two years," he was saying. "They're a mystery of medical science. No one knows what causes them. The pain was so bad this morning, I was crying. I couldn't move. I had to lie in a dark room in total silence. You know what it felt like? It felt like the Alien was inside my head, trying to get out my eyes."

The image was clear enough even to those who had not seen the movie *Alien*. He was asked why, with all the pain, had he bothered with such an unimportant



Milwaukee's Leiver hits the brakes at the end of the freeway

game? Abdul-Jabbar seemed to expect the question. If anything about him has been constant throughout his career, it has been his pride. "These guys are my teammates," he said. "But they are also my friends. They needed me."

Those familiar with Abdul-Jabbar knew there had been migraines before, usually in times of extreme tension. There had been bad ones in 1973, while he was playing for Milwaukee. They developed after seven people—a friend and six relatives of Abdul-Jabbar's Muslim mentor, Khalifa Hamass Abdul Khaalis, members of a group called the Hanafi—were murdered, allegedly by rival Black Muslims, in a Washington, D.C. house that Kareem had purchased for them. Abdul-Jabbar was thought to be a target as well, and he was accompanied by a bodyguard for several weeks. The immobilizing headaches came on again in 1977, after Khaalis and his Hanafi group sought revenge by invading three Washington buildings, including the national headquarters of F'nas B'rith. They held 132 hostages for 38 hours, leaving seven wounded and one dead. Khaalis went to jail, and the Jewish Defense League threatened to kidnap Abdul-Jabbar. This latest series of headaches—and more would follow—seemed to coincide with Abdul-Jabbar's pending divorce suit.

There are those who have always believed that a man who can dunk a basketball without leaving his feet should be the NBA's Most Valuable Player by default. Because size seems to be the primary requisite for getting the award—centers have won it 19 times in the 24 years it has been given, including Abdul-Jabbar in 1971, '72, '74, '76 and '77—the distinction isn't esteemed as highly as MVP honors in other sports. Maybe that is why smaller players—Cousy, Robertson, West, Baylor, Frazier, Erving, Havlicek, et al.—are accorded greater devotion than the giants who have played the game—Russell, Chamberlain, Abdul-Jabbar, Walton. They are expected to dominate.

Bill Russell, of course, was the perennial champion, the quintessentially unselfish team player/philosopher with the

continued



Dunk time at The Forum: Lawler is an innocent bystander as Jabbar soars and shows his stuff

KAREEM

continued

twinkly eyes and the thunderous laugh. Dominant though he was, you had to love Russell. Wilt Chamberlain, of imposing size and strength, once scored 100 points in a single game and averaged 50.4 in one season. But he was a colossus who evoked little affection. Bill Walton, one of the best all-round centers in history, has been beset by injuries; giants aren't supposed to be fragile.

And then there is Abdul-Jabbar, the first, the only player to incorporate every desirable element of the modern game into his own. He has the speed and grace of Baylor, the skill and finesse of West, the size and very nearly the strength of Chamberlain. He is a superb shot-blocker and a better passer than some think; he has seldom had teammates worth passing to. And he has been amazingly consistent, averaging nearly 30

points and 14 rebounds a game during his career. He has constantly been harassed by defenses, often by two opponents. Perhaps he has made what he does look too easy. He is not often "spectacular." But it is astounding how often he gets a "quiet" 32 points.

"He's always been my idol," says San Diego's Walton. "To me, he's the greatest."

"He does things to you that make you ask, 'Damn, now how could a man his size have done something like that?'" says Milwaukee's Bob Lanier.

A good bet to top off this, his 11th season, with his second championship ring, Abdul-Jabbar is also likely to accomplish what only one other professional athlete in any sport has done before him—win his sixth Most Valuable Player award. (Gordie Howe had six in hockey.) In pro

basketball Russell won five and Chamberlain four.

Abdul-Jabbar's athletic competence is not limited to basketball. He is a powerful runner, swimmer, bicycle racer and tennis player. He worked out last summer catching passes at the Minnesota Vikings' training camp with his friend Ahmad Rashad, and he practiced a form of kung fu for several years with the late Bruce Lee. Moreover, he is a terror on wheels at Flipper's Roller Boogie Palace in Hollywood, which he often goes to after Laker games. On a recent night he skated past two girls and heard one squeal to the other, "It's Wilt Chamberlain!"

Which brings up the perennial question: who ranks first among the great centers—Chamberlain, Russell or Abdul-Jabbar? Modesty prevents Kareem from saying what he truly believes—that it is he. "Kareem is a player," says West, his former coach, although he had become angry with Abdul-Jabbar at times when Kareem seemed to be playing less than inspired ball. "A great, great, great basketball player. My goodness, he does more things than anyone who has ever played this game. Wilt was a force. He could totally dominate a game. Take it. Make it his. People have thought that Kareem should be able to do that too. No. That would not make him a player of this game. Russell was a player. The greatest. But he was playing a different game than they're playing now. You can't compare the two of them."

What Russell had, of course—what great players must have in order to win—were other players around him. Abdul-Jabbar has not always had that luxury, and it rankles him that this has never seemed to matter to the press or the fans. "It's the misunderstanding most people have about basketball," he says, "that one man can make a team. One man can be a crucial ingredient on a team, but one man cannot make a team. In the past I have played on only three good teams—in '71 when we won the championship, '74 when we lost to Boston in the finals and '77 here in Los Angeles. It was only when Milwaukee picked up Oscar Robertson and Bob Boozer that we became a good team. When I came to Los Angeles in 1975, the Lakers had to give up three excellent young players to get me. Those guys—Brian Winters, Dave Meyers and Junior Bridgeman—made Mil-

continued

If L.A.'s opponents feel rejected, it's only natural: Abdul-Jabbar's the NBA leader in blocked shots



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Cheryl Pistono is Kareem's biggest booster, but also a critic when she feels he needs chiding

waukee a good team. I probably had my best year, and the Lakers finished next to last. In '77 we had the best team in the league, but we lost Kermit Washington and Lucius Allen just before the playoffs, and Portland beat us four straight.

"We were playing, more or less, with four guards and me. Don Ford was out-rebounded by Maurice Lucas something like 45-12. Yet everything written said that Walton had outplayed me. Walton played a great series. I played a great series. The Trail Blazers played a great series. The Lakers played a poor one. The press tried to make it seem like I was embarrassed. Walton made one dunk shot on me, and that was supposed to have signaled the end of Abdul-Jabbar being the best."

The press has apparently changed its mind—Abdul-Jabbar is the best again—because so many things have happened to make the Lakers fun once more. "I view that with total cynicism," Abdul-Jabbar says of the press turnaround.

First there was the arrival of the superb rookie point guard, effervescent Magic Johnson. He was going to be everybody's little brother, spark new life into the dour Kareem. Then came a new coach, Jack McKinney, to replace the problematical perfectionist, West. After McKinney suffered a serious injury in a

freak bicycling accident 13 games into the season, another new coach, a bright Shakespearean scholar from LaSalle College in Philadelphia, Paul Westhead, took over. Presiding over all was a new owner, millionaire playboy-mathematician Dr. Jerry Buss, who had pumped new life into the town by actually promoting the Lakers, and into the team by rewriting contracts, throwing lavish postgame parties stocked with Playboy Playmates and Bo Derek imitations, and flooding the locker room with the likes of James Caan, Sean Connery and O. J. Simpson.

Said Connery to Kareem after witnessing his first pro basketball game, "Metaphysically as well as literally, you stand head and shoulders above the rest of the gentlemen."

Every one of the Laker changes has worked like Magic, who has, says Abdul-Jabbar, "incredible talents that he brings to the game. He creates things for us the way nobody ever has for this team." Just as important have been Jim Chones, Mark Landsberger and Spencer Haywood, three strong and talented rebounders who came along this season to remove much of the inside burden from Abdul-Jabbar and enable Forward Jamaal Wilkes to play like an All-Star.

"Early in the season," says Westhead, "everything was Magic this and Magic

that. People sort of forgot about Kareem. In a way that was good, because, before long, everybody realized that Magic or no Magic, this team is nothing without Kareem. I mean nothing."

So many good things happening all at once sounds like some kind of Tinseltown fairy tale. But it so happens that at this moment Abdul-Jabbar is undergoing a rebirth, fighting his way out of the shell he has kept himself in for the past 15 years. It isn't easy. There has been racial hatred and distrust; violence perpetrated against his close friends and violence perpetrated by himself, a bad marriage; and now a messy divorce.

Abdul-Jabbar lives in a 10-room Bel Air house just down the road from Caan and O.J. and near the jazz musician and composer Quincy Jones. It is decorated with several of Abdul-Jabbar's valuable Oriental rugs and pieces of Islamic art he purchased in Africa and the Middle East.

The other day Abdul-Jabbar rather coldly told a visitor he had invited over to wait in the living room until he had finished dinner.

"Kareem!" came a loud, scolding female voice from the kitchen. "Tell him to come in here and sit with you!"

Whispers followed.

"Well, if you're going to be the way, I'll just have my dinner in the living room," she yelled, and came to the door, apologizing.

Cheryl Pistono is funny, friendly, delightfully smart-alecky, wise beyond her 23 years. Like Kareem, she has an uncommon odyssey behind her; somehow it fits that she should have ended up in the same place. She left a working-class family in LaSalle, Ill., at 16 to live with relatives on the Coast, went to Beverly Hills High School and got "into the high life. Hanging out at Hugh Hefner's, weekends in Las Vegas, stuff like that," she says. Like Kareem, she had been a disgruntled Catholic. Only she settled on Buddhism. "Some combination," she says, laughing. "Like oil and water, right?"

Last winter, when she brought Abdul-Jabbar home to meet her family, it was a big occasion. "Everyone was very excited, even though they didn't really know who he was," she says. "The funny thing is that my father is a really big basketball fan who had always loved Kareem, but when Kareem was in his house, he refused to come home. Couldn't han-

die the racial thing. Now my grandmother, who's in her 80s and lives out here, really gets on him. She cuts the articles about Kareem out of the papers and sends them to him, just to needle him."

Abdul-Jabbar readily acknowledges that Cheryl has had a greater impact on his adult life than any of his teachers, coaches, owners, friends or teammates. She convinced him to seek a divorce from his wife Habiba, whom he married in 1971 but has not lived with since 1973. The divorce is now being settled in court. Cheryl attacks inconsistencies in his religious beliefs—he removes paintings and photographs of human figures from the walls, according to Islamic law, and hides them under her bed when devout Muslim friends visit, for instance—and she rails at him for choosing religious laws over conventional ones. She was horrified that he fathered two children with Habiba after their separation—they have three—and told him so.

"I met a person who had never re-

ceived anything from anyone but praise," she said. "I mean, he was a god, right? No one ever told him, 'Hey, that's —. Why do you do that? That hurt that person.' People have always been afraid to tell him that they don't like him. I never praise him. Never. I'm the only person who ever told him he was full of —."

As if on cue, Abdul-Jabbar bursts from the kitchen, relaxed, beaming. "Cheryl, that was a wonderful dinner you prepared. Really praiseworthy."

"Kareem, you can be such a jerk...."

He laughed loud and hard until Cheryl left the room. Then he grew quiet and serious. He fingered a copy of *Heavy Metal*, his favorite science-fiction magazine. He was asked about the *Alien* metaphor. Could it be a metaphor for his life? "I suppose it could," he said. "Like there's an alien inside me trying to get out? Maybe. Maybe the alien is the real me that I have kept locked away for so long, like all my life. I've missed a lot of things. I know.

I'm trying very hard to change all that."

In his mind he went back to when he was a boy growing up in the Dyckman Street housing project, a racially mixed community in the Inwood section of Manhattan. Too many bad things had happened over the past 15 years, he says, for him to remember those days with fondness. He was, after all, a different person then—Lew Alcindor, Catholic—and now he finds himself a 33-year-old Muslim. "I feel sometimes that I went right from being a kid to where I am now," he says. Cheryl maintains he is still a kid.

He has no intention of renouncing Islam and becoming Alcindor again. He is a fervent believer, if less zealous than he once was. He just wants to recross the bridges between his past and his present that got burned, and try to recapture what he calls "a sense of reality."

When he was six years old he attached himself to the first and only real hero of his life, Jackie Robinson. continued

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"Not because he was the first black baseball player in the majors," Abdul-Jabbar says, "but 'cause he was a hero. See, I understand now what was going on then in terms of what it meant socially. But at the time I didn't understand that. My parents didn't explain it to me. I didn't even know that he was the first black. I didn't even realize that everyone else was white. All I knew was that Jack was out there and it was like Jack against the world and Jack was going to win. Jack took no prisoners. Guys like Sal Maglie would throw at Jack, and Jack would bunt down the first-base line and try to spike the

guy as he fielded the ball. Jack was serious. And that competitive intensity that he had—that I understood. But I didn't understand why it was the way it was I loved Jack."

Because he was what he was, Alcindor soon began to learn all that he could have wanted to know about the two subjects that would dominate most of his life—basketball and racial prejudice. As a boy he could never understand why his white friends seemed to feel that there was something wrong with being black. One afternoon, when he was 12, his best friend, a white boy, and two others fol-

lowed him home from school, shouting "Nigger! Black Boy! Blackie!" at him. That was when Abdul-Jabbar began constructing the wall.

At the same time, of course, he was becoming the greatest schoolboy basketball player of all time. In the eighth grade, when he was 6' 8", he had his first brush with high-pressure recruiting. Manhattan's Power Memorial Academy and Coach Jack Donohue won out, and Lew Alcindor began attracting a lot more attention than most urban black children received in the middle '60s. In his last three years at Power his teams won 78 of 79 games and three city Catholic championships. But along the way there were more of those moments that reinforced Alcindor's feeling that it was himself against the world, just like Jackie Robinson.

In his junior year Power was playing St. Helena's, an easy opponent, the night before its big game with powerful DeMatha of Hyattsville, Md. As Alcindor recalled in *SI* (Oct. 27, 1968): "We played rotten and I played rottenner than anybody, and at halftime we were only up by six points when we should have had the game settled by then. We went down to the coach's room, and Mr. Donohue started picking us apart one by one and telling us how awful we played, and then he pointed at me and he said, 'And you! You go out there and you don't hustle. You don't move. You don't do any of the things you're supposed to do. You're acting just like a nigger!'"

After Power won that game, and the DeMatha game, Donohue tried to laugh off the incident, saying, "See? My strategy worked!" But it worked instead to help shove Lew Alcindor into what he calls his "white-hating period."

"I was 17 years old, being cheered on the basketball court but being called a 'nigger' by those same people on the street," he says. That summer riots erupted in Harlem. "I stepped off the subway right into the middle of it. It was chaos, wild, insane, and I just stood there trembling. Cops were swinging nightsticks at everybody, bullets were flying, windows were being smashed, people were stealing and looting. All I could think of was that I wanted to stay alive, so I took off running and I didn't stop till I was at 137th and Broadway, several blocks away. And then I sat huffing and puffing

continued



Two good skates: Kareem and Cheryl, wheel into action at Flipper's, a Hollywood roller disco

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and pondering about what I'd seen, and I knew what it was: rage, black rage. The poor people of Harlem felt that it was better to get hit with a nightstick than to keep on taking the white man's insults forever. Right then and there I knew who I was and who I had to be. I was going to be black rage personified, black power in the flesh."

He went to UCLA, influenced in part by a letter from a famous alumnus named Jackie Robinson. Three NCAA championships followed, and UCLA lost just two games in all that time, one being the celebrated Astrodome matchup against Houston and Elvin Hayes. That game took place just eight days after Alcindor suffered his first serious eye injury, a scratched eyeball.

Fame at UCLA did not make life any happier for Alcindor, who had already come to think of basketball as nothing more than business, though it was important for him to be the best. He nearly left UCLA for Michigan after his sophomore year, and after his junior year he incurred a great deal of resentment when he aligned himself with Harry Edwards and called upon all black athletes to boycott the 1968 Olympics. The boycott failed to materialize, although Alcindor himself stayed away, working with black children in New York instead. By his senior year he had retreated into his Islamic studies, had few friends and spent most of his time alone.

"Ever since childhood I had this ability to draw into myself and be perfectly contented," he said in 1969. "I had to, I had always been such a minority of one. Very tall. Black. Catholic. I withdrew into myself to find myself. I made no further attempts to integrate. I was consumed and obsessed by my interest in the black man, in black power, black pride, black courage. That, for me, would suffice."

After his Rookie-of-the-Year season in 1970 with Milwaukee, Alcindor made his conversion to Islam public and changed his name to Kareem (generous) Abdul (servant of Allah) Jabbar (powerful). "I never had any real trouble passing my change off on the public," he says now. "Because of my talent on the basketball court, people tended to avoid engaging me in any conflict if they could help it. The people in Milwaukee were good about it, they realized I wasn't some sort

of idiot. The coach, Larry Costello, had some trouble. He kept stumbling—'Lew... Kareem... Lew... Kareem.' He was very self-conscious about not saying the wrong thing."

In 1971 the Bucks won the NBA championship, and Abdul-Jabbar picked up his first MVP award. They won at least 60 games in each of the next two seasons, and lost to Boston in the championship final in 1974. But life was still dragging on Abdul-Jabbar. His friends had been murdered in 1973, his marriage had broken up, he was shattered in Milwaukee, a town he was not enthusiastic about in the first place. "I would stay home, read, get into my music," he says. His frustrations built up, that after suffering his second serious eye injury in a 1974 exhibition game, he slammed a basket standard in disgust and fractured his hand.

When his contract expired in 1975 he did all he could to get back to New York, to play for the Knicks, which had been his lifelong dream. When that fell through he chose Los Angeles. He still kept mostly to himself, although there were more people he could be comfortable with—Muslim friends and jazz musicians like Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea. Generally speaking, his teammates at the time did not fit that category. "My feeling about basketball then was that I was paid to play my best and that is what I did," he says, "not to get guys on the behind and be their friend."

The worst year of his life was 1977. In March his friend Khalil led the Hana Muslim siege on the B'nai Brith building in Washington and ended up in prison. Abdul-Jabbar became the target of kidnap and death threats. Later in the spring the Lakers, with the best record in the NBA, lost four straight playoff games to Walton and the Portland Trail Blazers. The papers suggested that Abdul-Jabbar was washed up. That fall, on opening night of the 1977-78 season in Milwaukee, of all places, Abdul-Jabbar reacted to an elbow to the solar plexus from rookie Kent Benson by throwing a brutal punch that gave Benson a concussion and broke Abdul-Jabbar's hand. Again, his own violent reaction upset Abdul-Jabbar, but not nearly so much as the reaction from the public and the

league office. He was fined \$5,000, while Benson was not even reprimanded.

"Everyone's attitude was that it was totally my fault," says Abdul-Jabbar. "So again it was me against the world. I can understand how the punch happened. He was a rookie, he made a mistake. When he did that I thought of all the times I was provoked, abused, bullied, scorned, and I was not going to take one more thing. My reaction was extreme, no two ways about it, but the league's reaction was wrong. It was neither my fault nor Benson's, totally. It was the system's."

Just two months earlier Abdul-Jabbar had first met Cheryl. "I had no interest in him," she recalls. "because I never liked the people who were into the sports mentality, and despite everything else, he obviously was. He expected me to fall all over him. Women always had, but one day he brought me a rose from his garden. He was serious as hell! I thought, oh, I've got to get this person to laugh. All I could think of was to not hurt him."

Abdul-Jabbar insists that basketball was really what his life had been about all along. He loves it and expects to play, he says, "as long as I keep my mental and physical health." But in December of 1977 he was nearly ready to quit. Just a month after his hand had healed sufficiently for him to return to action, he witnessed yet another violent act when teammate Kermit Washington crushed the face of Houston's Rudy Tomjanovich with a punch. "He was miserable," says Cheryl. "I sent him air-express letters saying, 'Kareem, your career is not a jail sentence.' He felt so sorry for himself it was disgusting."

Cheryl "got serious" with him and told him what he had to do. How he had to be more than just a basketball player, he had to be a leader. How he had to stop pushing people away and start listening to what they had to say. How he had to forget about keeping his emotions inside of himself, because they would continue to come out as fits of rage. And they did. Hearing these things from her one evening, he became so enraged he broke two doors in his house off their hinges.

Gradually he has come around, has gotten less "serious." But when a person has been locked in so long, making changes is not easy. Cheryl introduced him to roller skating. It is a staggering sight to see a man his size doing disco moves on

continued

wheels with consummate grace. But he does, and he is happy, and he actually blends into the bizarre crowd at Flipper's. Even so, sometimes he closes up. One night a young fan approached Kareem to tell him how great he was. Kareem gave a blank look and the tiniest nod, but would not speak. The fellow skated off in a huff and confronted Cheryl. "Hey," he said, "how can someone be so great on the court and such a — off it?"

Cheryl felt terrible. "Did he nod to you?" she asked. "If he did, it came from his heart, believe me." Then she chastised Kareem.

"It bothers me that people interpret me the way that they do," Abdul-Jabbar says. "I don't mean to be intimidating. I'm about respect. I want people to respect me, that's all. It's something I get from my father. He's a cop—a big, strong man, very quiet. That intimidates people. He was my example. I'm just like Big Al," that's what I always thought.

"Now I realize what happened to me. O.K., I was big. That never bothered me. I always liked being big. But because I was a basketball star, all my life people had gone to a great amount of trouble to insulate me from things. It was necessary, it seemed then. My high school coach had to insulate me from the flesh peddlers, and there were hundreds of them in New York. At UCLA they had to insulate me from the press. In Milwaukee I signed a very large contract and they were careful not to overburden me. Beautiful. It was all so easy to accept. I liked it that way. And even the people I learned about Islam from felt that it wasn't necessary for me to learn it the way it was generally taught, because that wasn't good enough for me, so they made my environment as pure as possible. My parents were part of it, too. When I was under their guardianship they always told me to go along with the program. I bought it all because there were immediate rewards—winning basketball games. Later I won basketball games and made a lot of money. Looking back on it now, I don't think any of it did me a whole lot of good.

"I didn't realize that I was missing so much. So a lot of the things I'm going through now, the things Cheryl has spoken about, have to do with reviewing my

life and picking up on things I did wrong. Now I'm dealing with my life, by myself, for the first time in my life."

Westhead, the rookie interim coach, marvels at the man he had known, by reputation, as "the aloof Kareem." "I expected there to be this so-called 'chill factor,' but there is none of that at all," he says. "Maybe it is his soft personality. The guys seem to thrive on it. It's like he's their big brother. He's got so many stories. O.K., maybe a half hour before games, everybody gets quiet and waits for Kareem to tell one of his stories. He tells these special tales about growing up in New York, characters he's met. It's story time, then everybody goes out and plays basketball."

It is true. One day Kareem is telling about how Wilt took him out to dinner when he was a senior in high school. He had the Bentley and the racehorses and every beautiful woman in Manhattan, and he takes me to his pad and there is the finest woman I have ever seen in my life. I'm 17 and my eyes are big as apples and my jaw is hanging open. . . . Another day he tells about "the toughest dude who ever lived in Harlem, Sugar Stump," so named because he used to connive to get sugar-ration stamps during World War II. "One time Sugar hit the number and two guys ambushed him, shot him three times in the stomach. Man, Sugar chased 'em both, beat one to pieces and about caught the other when he finally checked out. . . ."

Once he told about the most amazing player he had seen, a visitor to Harlem from Philadelphia for a playground all-star game. "This dude brought his own cheering section from Philly, man, and I had never even heard of him. Before the game they start screaming, 'Jesus! Black Jesus! Black Jesus!' I thought, who was this dude? He was about 6'3", and the first play of the game he got a rebound on the defensive end of the court and started spinning! Man, he spun four times! Now, he's 90 feet from the hoop and this dude is spinning! Well, on the fourth spin he throws the ball in a hook motion. It bounced at midcourt and then it just rose, and there was a guy at the other end and running full speed and he caught it in stride and laid it in. A full-court bounce pass! After I saw that I could understand all the Black Jesus

stuff. I didn't find out the dude's real name until way later. It was Earl Monroe. . . ."

An evening at the Bel Air house with Cheryl and Kareem has grown late. Kareem has talked about a movie he has just made, a spoof on the Airport films, called *Airplane*, in which, wearing his famous goggles, he plays a co-pilot, a record album he is contemplating making, on which he will play conga drums along with Tio Pente's percussionist, Joe Madera; a shopping trip in Karachi, Pakistan, during which he purchased Oriental rugs and was followed around by 300 people who, because of his great height, regarded him as a rare curiosity; his father—"I escaped a lot of whippin' in my time thanks to Big Al"—and the crowd at Flipper's, where, the night before, ex-football star Jimmy Brown had accidentally crashed into a girl and broken her leg.

Abruptly the conversation dries up. "Kareem!" Cheryl implores. "Tell about Magic."

"Knee Deep," he says. "That's the name of a song Magic keeps playing on his box. He's kind of worn me out with that." He laughs.

"But he had all the stewardesses dancing on the plane after you beat Boston for the second time, Kareem, and he had you dancing too."

"No," he protests. "I wasn't dancing on the plane."

"Pat Riley got off the plane and told me you were in the aisle."

"Nah. Pat Riley wasn't in on it." "He said you were standing in the aisle and. . . ."

"I couldn't even stand up in the aisle if. . . ."

"I don't believe you!" "Well, maybe I did do some moves in my seat."

He tried to be serious, but he and Cheryl laughed and laughed.

"Kareem, remember opening night in San Diego when you made that hook shot at the buzzer to win the game, and Magic leaped up on you and hugged you and everyone jumped up and down in the middle of the floor?"

"Yeah," said Abdul-Jabbar, laughing. "It was like we just won the seventh game of the championships."

"Maybe you did."

END

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SPECIAL INTEREST

Sir:

I had been anticipating the arrival of your annual special issue, *The Year in Sports*, and now that I have read it, I find only one word to describe it: unbelievable! I have never before seen such an array of sports photographs in one magazine. My congratulations to Don Deliquanti and the entire crew at SI for making a great year in sports even better.

EDWARD SCHWETLER
Simi Valley, Calif.

Sir:

I couldn't pick out the best picture because all were so outstanding. It was a fantastic year in sports and your special issue topped it off.

SAM GALITZER
North Miami Beach, Fla.

Sir:

I couldn't resist writing to let *SPORTS ILLUSTRATED* and Kenny Moore know how much I enjoyed his story on the Golden Mile (*The Golden Mile: the Torch Is Passed*).

Moore is as talented with his pen as Sebastian Coe is with his spikes. The story was incredibly moving and told it like it really is. It almost made me with I were a mile...almost.

EVELYN ASHFORD
Los Angeles

Sir:

Kenny Moore's informative view of the runners—before, during and after the Oslo Mile—is the sweetest piece of writing on the sport I've ever read.

JIM MERROW
South Berwick, Maine

Sir:

Well, we should be used to it by now. In your section on college football you have a two-page picture with splashy headlines about how USC "boosted 'Bama" to No. 1 and only a two-thirds-page picture at the end of the section on the national champs. Come on!

CHRIS BROWN
Montgomery, Ala.

Sir:

The minute I saw your special issue I sat down and devoured it. What a case of indigestion! One picture of the NASL's Trevor Whyman at the back of the magazine is not how a professional soccer league should be covered.

CHRIS HOWE
Swampscott, Mass.

Sir:

One lousy picture on the NHL season? That's disgusting!

TRACY CHALLENGER
Rochester, N.Y.

Sir:

Don't you people know what lacrosse is?

RON HUNWITZ
Miami

Sir:

Again this year I failed to find any mention of harness racing.

JOHN TOMASELLA
Hampton, N.J.

Sir:

You will never get a rating of 10 if your special issue continues to ignore the accomplishments of U.S. gymnasts. The omission was especially glaring this year because Kurt Thomas received the Sullivan Award for being the outstanding amateur athlete of 1979.

BILL R. SHELTON
President
Chamber of Commerce
Fort Worth

Sir:

You're a lifesaver! While my sister was home from college, she chucked my copy of your swimsuit issue in disgust. She has since returned to school, and now you have brought Christine Brinkley back to me via *The Year in Sports*. I thank you, and the walls of my room thank you.

REG MEALEY
Albany, N.Y.

EXPANSIONIST THEORIES

Sir:

I take issue with William F. Reed's contention that the NCAA basketball tournament has lost its "kick," having been "diluted" by the increase of the field to 48 teams (*VIEWPOINT*, March 17). The most eloquent rebuttal to the dilution charges is the fact that three of the final four teams in this year's tournament (Iowa, Purdue and UCLA) finished third or worse in their respective conferences and would never have been invited to the sort of 16-team tournament that Reed prefers. Another statistic that shows the parity of talent among college teams this season is that there was a total of 105 regular-season losses among the 16 regional semifinalists. You could also point to the number of upsets in the tournament and the closeness of the scores when favored teams did win. The balance in college basketball demands an expanded field—and the fans are the beneficiaries. The relevant question now is: Are 48 teams enough?

BRUCE WRENN
Berrien Springs, Mich.

Sir:

I couldn't agree more with William F. Reed. The NCAA tournament is diluted, and so is the quality of regular-season play. Why

should a team kill itself for three months when it can coast to a mediocre season and still make the NCAA tournament? For example, the final game of the SEC race, between Kentucky and LSU, decided the conference champion. Big deal. No matter which team won, both were going to play again, this time in the postseason SEC tournament. But wait, no matter who won that championship, both teams were going to the NCAA tournament anyway and would play in the region that best suited the NCAA.

The way things are going, the regular-season conference standings and races don't mean a thing. They might as well put everyone in a big arena and start playing the NCAA tournament right after Thanksgiving!

CARL J. STASHUNAS
Nashville

A REALLY GOOD JOE

Sir:

Several times during the many years I have enjoyed SI I have wanted to write and compliment you on your well written articles. Your report on Joe Paterno and Penn State football (*"There Are a Lot of People Who Think I'm a Phony and Now They Think They Have Proof,"* March 17) left me no choice.

As a walk-on who unsuccessfully tried to make Penn State's talented 1969 football team, I found Douglas S. Looney's account right on target. Those few months during which I was directly involved in Paterno's program forever instilled in me important principles that we all should apply every day: give everyone a fair, equal opportunity; always put forth your best effort; and be aware of the lasting rewards of sharing.

ROBERT SCOTT
Laguna Niguel, Calif.

Sir:

Your article about Joe Paterno explored the many human frailties of the legendary Joe. However, his record speaks for itself: one of the best overall programs in the nation for more than 10 years; a percentage of graduates higher than that of most other major university athletic programs; and the philosophy of "it's only a game." Sure, the pressures of big-time football are there, but Joe, his staff and players have shown again and again that you can be a class outfit without sacrificing morality and ethics. So Joe is having a rough time, He'll pull through, and he has the support of students, alumni and friends. He certainly is human, but he's a class guy.

RICHARD ABELS
Penn State '73
Denver

continued

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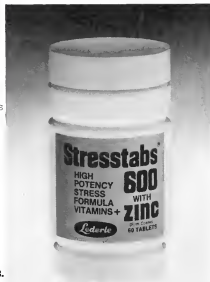
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19TH HOLE continued

Sir:

The best evidence that Joe Paterno practices what he preaches is Pete Harris. How many other coaches would have let a junior All-America, who led the country in interceptions, go the way of academic ineligibility?

As for Pitt Coach Jackie Sherrill's comment, Joe doesn't tell other schools how to run their programs, he just gives the other coaches something to strive for.

Whether his record is 8-4 or 12-0, we still like Joe's style!

JERRY AND JEAN FLECKENSTEIN
Pittsburgh

Sir:

Your article about Joe Paterno was almost as boring as Penn State's football team.

CHARLES KYLE
Cleveland, Tenn.

Sir:

Where is Penn State? You started out your Joe Paterno article by correctly saying that it is located in State College, Pa. Later you re-located it in College Station, home of Texas A&M. Then, at the conclusion of your article, you moved it to College Park, home of the Maryland Terrapins. State College may be "somewhere south of oblivion," but to Penn State's loyal following it's known as Happy Valley.

You were 100% correct when you stated that Penn State needs an imaginative offensive coordinator. Amen!

DANIEL A. GIFFORD
Camp Hill, Pa.

Sir:

Actually, Penn State is located in University Park, in the borough of State College.

JANET FOX
KAREN CONNOLLY
University Park, Pa.

WOMEN'S BODYBUILDING

Sir:

The article on women bodybuilders by Dan Levin (*Here She Is, Miss, Well, What?* March 17) was incredible. Ever since I first saw the sport showcased on TV's *Real People*, I have been fascinated with the developed female form; I never knew women could be so muscular and yet so beautiful. Their femininity is not lost by development, nor is my masculinity threatened. I hope this story brings the sport out of the gym and into the spotlight.

JOHN M. EVERINGHAM
Marquette, Mich.

Sir:

Dan Levin's article on women's bodybuilding wasn't as inspirational as the pictures that accompanied it. During the years I've been working with weights, I have never been sure what I could look like. I originally thought Jane Fonda was a good model, but now Camille Lusk, Kay Baxter and Laura Combers have replaced her.

LAURA R. KINSEY
Eugene, Ore.

Sir:

As to those brawny broads, more power to them.

SUSAN SACHS
Alexandria, Va.

Sir:

I have never seen anything so gross in my life. This will be the biggest setback to women's athletics since Bobby Riggs defeated Margaret Court. If women want to lift weights to firm up, strengthen or tone their muscles, that's great. But if they are seeking to develop the kind of massive bulky muscles usually seen only on men, that's disgusting.

RON K. BUTLER
Austin, Texas

Sir:

Does this mean we can expect a future article about men trying to look like women?

RANDY BLAND
Bernas Point, N.Y.

Sir:

Ugly! Ugly! Ugly!

J. ADAMS
Pittsburgh

Sir:

Being three weak college students without draft deferments, your *Miss What?* article has proved to us that our female population could do well representing the U.S. Army in combat. We just wish Congress would review your piece on women's bodybuilding and leave us to our heavy books.

BREUCE H. WARD
KENNEDY P. SCHMIDT
PETER J. URBON
Tempe, Ariz.

Sir:

D.K. D.K. I'd rather see the annual swimsuit issue than the swimsuits on the female bodybuilders!

MARY RICHARDSON
Saxon, Wis.

Sir:

Regarding your article on women bodybuilders, you may be interested to know that we conducted a survey of our morning listeners about what they thought of the sport. Approximately 75% were against it or couldn't understand why any woman would want to participate. Twenty-five percent were for it, saying why not? The callers who were "for" were all female.

We took another survey—of the station deejays—on whether we should pin up the pictures from the SI article. The vote was overwhelmingly against that idea. I don't think Christine Brinkley has anything to worry about.

CHARLIE MCCOY
Radio Station WANS-FM
Anderson, S.C.

Address editorial mail to SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, Time & Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, New York, 10020.

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LAUREN BACALL



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23

EPA
EST.
MPG

38

EPA
EST.
MPG

Back to the practical for a moment. Of course, mileage is somewhere near the top of your mind. The new Fairmont Futura 4-Door doesn't disappoint. Compare its estimated MPG to other cars. Understand that your mileage may differ depending on speed, distance and weather. Actual highway mileage will probably be less than estimates. And California MPG is lower.

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